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THIS MONTH

		Page
ANGLICAN RESPONSIBILITIES IN UNITY DISCUSSIONS	Herbert Waddams	1
CHRISTIAN NOVELS	Nicholas Mosley	7
CHRISTIAN DRAMA	James Brabazon	11
THE MERCAT THEATRE TRUST	Lennox Milne	16
RELIGION . . . AND ALL THAT JAZZ	Rex Walford	19
LETTER FROM NIGERIA	Cecil Northcott	23
HOW TO BE THE SCUM OF THE EARTH	Roger Tennant	25
"THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES"	DR. W. R. MATTHEWS	28 and *passim*
SWEDISH CHURCH ART	Peter J. Chandler	31
LITURGICAL LESSONS FROM PARIS	Bernard Croft	37
COMMENT		41
LETTERS		47
REVIEWS	Timothy Beaumont	57
POETRY	Frank Buchanan, A. D. Duncan	60
CHURCH ARCHITECTURE AND CHRISTIAN UNITY	RALPH ACKROYD	62
NEW CHURCHES	J. T. A. GUNSTONE	66

Anglican responsibilities in unity discussions

HERBERT WADDAMS

In May 1961 the question of relations between the Church of England and the proposed Church of Lanka came before the two Convocations of Canterbury and York. An important and interesting feature of the discussions was that the comments of the Old Catholic Archbishop Rinkel of Utrecht had been asked and given. There seems to have been some disagreement as to whether his comments ought to have influenced the Convocations or not. The statement of the then Archbishop of Canterbury to the full synod of the Convocation of Canterbury that "He very properly declined to give any guidance" seems, in the light of the facts, to be somewhat overstated, seeing that the Archbishop of Utrecht said that the Bishops of the Old Catholic Churches "are in strong agreement with the arguments of the Minority Report". The facts of the matter seem to be clear and can be summarised as follows: the Old Catholic Bishops do not like the Ceylon Scheme on the grounds which the Minority Report set out, but they are unwilling to commit themselves about future relations which depend (a) on the creation of a new Church which does not at present exist, and (b) on relations with it on the part of the Church of England which have not yet been defined. This seems a reasonable and clear point of view, and is definitely weighted on the side of opposition to the Scheme. To say therefore that no guidance was given is hardly accurate.

The matter is important even if we consider our relations with the Old Catholics alone, but it has brought up a larger question which ought to have more attention than it has so far received. It is whether the Ceylon Scheme and others which are under consideration are compatible with the official statements and actions of the Church of England in their relations with other Christian bodies, in particular the Orthodox and the Roman Catholics as well as the Old Catholics. This is a matter which affects the very basis of all attempts to encourage Christian unity, for it must be obvious to every Anglican that Anglican efforts to have closer relations with one group of Christians will not be very fruitful if at the same time they

appear to involve the betrayal of principles which they have accepted in discussion with others.

To put the point in an acute form: having established full communion with group A on one basis, can this now be abandoned in honesty on the grounds that we should like closer relations with group B? This does not presuppose that such an abandonment has actually taken place, but makes it clear that care should be taken to see that it does not.

The former question would apply at present only to the Old Catholics. It would have to be rephrased for the Orthodox like this: Having officially led a large section of Christendom to believe that adherence to certain principles is at least consistent with Anglican attitudes, belief and behaviour, can we now rightly act in a way which is not consistent with such principles?

Such questions cover a good many aspects of belief and practice. It would take much time and space to deal with them all. Here we shall confine ourselves to the question of Orders. First we shall try to see to what the Church of England is officially committed in the eyes of other Christians, and after this has been done it will be possible to examine the Ceylon Scheme, or any other, to see whether these commitments are compatible with the scheme in question.

It is important to understand that this is a matter of Anglican honesty and consistency, not of the intervention in Anglican affairs by other Churches. For example the question of Old Catholics intervening or influencing the decisions of the Convocations is a red herring. Obviously the Church of England or any other Anglican Church will make its own decisions. But the Church of England has quite voluntarily given certain assurances and impressions to other Churches, and it is most important that these Churches should not feel that they have been betrayed in what they have been led to believe by official or semi-official representatives and actions of the Church of England. It is a matter of plain honesty, and an effort of imagination is needed to try to see what impression others would have naturally received.

There can be little use in efforts towards Christian unity if the principles on which they rest and the assurances which have been exchanged are thought to be merely temporary manoeuvres without any real permanent validity. Truth and love would not find any room in such an attitude. There can be little doubt that a suspicion that this is the case does exist in some quarters as regards Anglican policy,

and it is this which makes it urgent that the situation should be examined. The suspicion can then either be dispelled, or, if found to be justified, a new direction must be chosen.

We shall therefore take one or two of the main landmarks on the attitude and meaning of Orders, as official Anglican spokesmen have expressed them, in order to compare them with the Ceylon Scheme. A similar exercise could be, and ought to be, undertaken in regard to other aspects of the Scheme such as dogma, sacraments, and other practices. The points chosen deal with the "Catholic" aspect of the matter since this is the area where the dispute is at present centred.

The first document from which we shall quote is the Reply of the Archbishops of England of 29th March, 1897, to the Bull condemning Anglican Orders. (Eng. Edition, S.P.C.K.)

p. 32. "We acknowledge therefore with the Pope that the laying on of hands is the matter of ordination; we acknowledge that the form is prayer or blessing appropriate to the ministry to be conferred; we acknowledge that the intention of the Church, as far as it is externally manifested, is to be ascertained, so that we may discover if it agrees with the mind of the Lord and His Apostles and with the Statutes of the Universal Church."

p. 35. "But we answer as regards the passages quoted by the Pope, that we make provision with the greatest reverence for the consecration of the holy Eucharist and commit it only to properly ordained Priests and to no other ministers of the Church."

p. 45. "The two commissions taken together include everything essential to the Christian priesthood, and, in our opinion, exhibit it more clearly than is done in the Sacramentaries and Pontificals. Nor indeed do we avoid the term *Sacerdos* and its correlatives either in the Latin edition of the *Book of Common Prayer or of the Ministry of the Sacraments as administered in the Church*, published in 1560 in the reign of Elizabeth, nor in other public documents written in Latin.

"That this was not done without intention appears from the fact that in our translations of the Bible published in the sixteenth century the word ιερευς is rendered by Priest (the word which is always used in the Anglican Ordinal, and very often in the Communion Office and elsewhere), while πρεσβντερος is translated Elder.

"When therefore in 1662 the addition 'for the office and work of a

Bishop *or* Priest' was made, it would not seem to have been done in view of the Roman controversy, but in order to enlighten the minds of the Presbyterians, who were trying to find a ground for their opinions in our Prayer Book . . . These words then were not added to give liturgical completeness to the form. For the changes mentioned drew us further away from the Pontificals instead of bringing us nearer. The object of the addition therefore was to declare the difference in the orders."

It is not necessary to hold that the views of the two Archbishops are necessarily binding *de fide* on every member of the Church of England. But on the other hand they do not fit in very well with the proposal in the Ceylon Scheme to eschew the word "priest" altogether. It would seem at first sight that someone who did agree with the two Archbishops would find it hard to accept the terminology which is deliberately adopted in that Scheme. The second of the above extracts is directly opposed to the resolution of the 1958 Lambeth Conference No. 21. It is hardly to be wondered at if outsiders reading the two statements together, have doubts as to the reliability of Anglican statements.

The next document to which attention should be given is that entitled "Terms of Intercommunion suggested between the Church of England and the Churches in Communion with her and the Eastern Orthodox Church". These terms were drawn up at the request of the Eastern Churches Committee of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and in themselves they have no official status as an authoritative or complete official Anglican statement. Nevertheless they have been given quite clear recognition by the Lambeth Conference of 1930 in Resolution 33 (c) which accepted the statements of the Anglican Bishops who had conferred with Orthodox representatives. One of these statements was as follows: (Lambeth Conference 1930. S.P.C.K., p. 138):

"2. It was agreed by the Anglican Bishops that the 'Terms of Intercommunion suggested between the Church of England and the Churches in Communion with her and the Eastern Orthodox Church', published under the auspices of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Eastern Churches Committee in 1921, though not officially communicated to the different Provinces of the Anglican Communion, are not inconsistent with the mind and doctrine of the Anglican Church."

This is a cautious statement and does not bind any Anglican

Church. But it is to be remembered that we are not here dealing with legal niceties but with the impression conveyed to and received by those with whom Anglican authorities were having official conversations. There can be no doubt that the impression conveyed, and intended to be conveyed, was that the "Terms" represented sound Anglican doctrine. Moreover the "Terms" formed the basis for the official "Joint Doctrinal Commission appointed by the Oecumenical Patriarch and the Archbishop of Canterbury for consultation on the points of agreement and difference between the Anglican and the Eastern Orthodox Churches" (Report S.P.C.K. 1932). That means that they have been used as a fair summary of Anglican doctrine when discussing relations with the Orthodox. The following quotations come from the "Terms" (Documents on Christian Unity. G. K. A. Bell. Vol. I. 1924 Oxford. Pp. 77 and following).

"In order that the Word of God might be preached and the Sacraments duly administered our Lord instituted a Ministry for His Church, and the Apostles ordained ministers by the laying on of hands with prayer, and the Catholic Church has laid down rules for the continuation and ordering of the Ministry. We desire always to fulfil the commands of Christ, the intention of the Apostles, and the rule of the Church . . . and we agree that in accordance with our common usage and the canon of the Council of Nicaea every bishop be consecrated by three other bishops at least, and that all priests and deacons be ordained by bishops with the laying on of hands and prayer."

The committee of Bishops at the 1930 Lambeth Conference, to which reference has already been made, went on in their report to make several other statements of importance.

"4. It was stated by the Anglican Bishops that in questions of faith the authentic decision would be given in the Anglican Communion by the whole body of Bishops without, however, excluding the co-operation of clergy and laity during the discussions."

"8. It was stated by the Anglican Bishops that in the Anglican Communion Ordination is not merely the appointment of a man into a particular post, but that in Ordination a special *charisma* is given to the person Ordained, proper to the Order, and that the nature of the special gift is indicated in the words of Ordination, and that in this sense Ordination is a *mysterion*."

It would seem in the light of this last statement that any reunion plan which appeared to provide for Anglican priests to undergo a

ceremony which could be thought to be another Ordination would be a direct rebuttal of the official statement of the Lambeth Conference. Here again the question is not how it might be explained by ingenious Anglicans, but how it would naturally appear to those to whom these original statements were made.

The "Report of the Conference at Bucharest" in 1935 (Press and Publications Board of the Church Assembly) again emphasises the character of Ordination with other rites as "having the character of Sacraments and . . . commonly called Sacraments" (p. 10). On the same page we read that the Rumanian Commission considered the declarations of the Anglicans as "in accordance with the Doctrine of the Orthodox Church" and on that ground recommended the recognition of the validity of Anglican Orders.

When this Report came before the Convocation of Canterbury it was accepted as "consonant with Anglican formularies and a legitimate interpretation of the Faith of the Church as held by the Anglican Communion". In other words it was not thought to be binding as the only possible way of expounding the Faith, but it was recognised as having a proper status as Anglican belief. This brings out the point at issue, namely whether the new schemes for reunion are such that they are consonant with such a status. In short, are the Ceylon Scheme and others such that those joining them could still expound the proposed new Church's doctrine in the terms which have been used by Anglicans in the past and claim that such an exposition is fully legitimate as consonant with the formularies of the new Church? If the answer to this question is "no", or even if it is doubtful, there can surely be no question as to the need to see that the formularies and arrangements are changed so that the answer becomes "yes"; otherwise Anglicans will be open to the charge of deception or betrayal, or at the very least of disingenuousness.

Christian Novels

NICHOLAS MOSLEY

A good novel is one that tells a story that not only is life-like but seems to illuminate life—to suggest some order and meaning. Most mediocre novels, oddly, try to have this latter quality and not the former. They tell stories which have a certain pattern: but the pattern exists in a dream-world of projection and wish-fulfilment, and has little to do with life as people experience it. (The sort of novels I mean are the romances with artificial misunderstandings and happy-marriage endings: adventure stories with heroes and villains of the purest white and black.) These novels have value as relaxation and entertainment; but unless they awaken some mythical echoes beneath the surface (a characteristic of poetry rather than of such novels) they are more of a drug than an illumination.

Most well-written novels, on the other hand, although they try to give accurate accounts of life as it is experienced, nowadays give few suggestions of order or meaning. There is a tradition of French novel-writing in particular (starting I suppose with Stendhal and going through Gide to moderns like Robbe-Grillet) which is concerned almost explicitly to say that life has no meaning—that man is helpless within chaos. This itself is a statement about the significance of life, but there is something contradictory at the heart of these novels, in that they suggest by what they say that all is chaos, and yet by their very existence—their form and structure as works of art—they seem to demonstrate that it is not.

A Christian novelist avoids this fault because he assumes from his belief that life has meaning. He can fall into the former fault easily enough—that of "falsifying" experience by projecting his dreams and wish-fulfilments. But the astonishing thing about Christian novel-writing is not the amount of its failures or successes, but the fact that there is so little of it at all.

On the face of it, the novel is a very good form of Christian expression. There are many fundamental Christian truths which are almost impossible to express didactically. There are the paradoxes such as those between determinism and free will, or of the way that good can come out of evil. These are admitted to be "mysteries";

and any direct statement about them seems able to be countered by an opposite and yet equally valid statement. The best that can be said directly about these paradoxes is that they do best express what is actually experienced in life. The novel would thus seem to be a proper means of further describing them, since a novel is not concerned with rationalising life, but describing how it works in experience.

Why, then, aren't there more Christian novels? Why don't Christian writers write novels instead of those academic works in which everything seems to mean much the same as its opposite? And why (a harder question) don't Christian readers want to read more Christian novels?

The answer to the question about writing is, partly, that it is so difficult. Although a Christian starts off with the assumption that there is a pattern and meaning to life, this is a burden as well as an encouragement to him, because the meaning is of one particular kind—one that is known only to God. Thus if a Christian novelist wants to write "truly" of experience, he finds himself in the alarming position of trying to write as God would write, which by definition he can't do. It's true that in much of the ordinary business of living a Christian is trying to do just this—the impossible task of doing what God might do—but the writing of a novel is a more self-conscious business, because it is deliberately fashioning and creating.

But these considerations in themselves probably wouldn't give cold feet to novelists—a notoriously reckless lot. And it's right that they shouldn't, because the demand upon man to do what only God can do is in every situation and is (paradoxically) not impossible. The real reason why there are so few good Christian novels nowadays seems to be that Christians are out of the habit of being interested in life in this way. They are interested not so much in how and why people behave, as in how they ought to behave and what ought to be done about them: not so much in observing, learning from, wondering at life, as in discussing theoretical solutions to it. Thus Christians do not want novels, which describe what life is, but exhortations, essays, sermons, which describe what life might be. These latter forms of expression of course are necessary: they only might be better understood if balanced by an interest in the springs of actual situations.

It is significant that the greatest (in my opinion) Christian novel —*The Brothers Karamazov*—is held in greater repute by agnostics

than by most church people. It would probably not be held by agnostics to be a Christian novel at all: they would say it describes Christian characteristics accurately (as in Alyosha Karamazov) but also other characteristics accurately, notably those of an intellectual (Ivan Karamazov) and a sensualist (Dmitri Karamazov). Ivan's argument against the Church in the parable of *The Grand Inquisitor* is usually held by agnostics to be a defeat for Christianity, because Alyosha cannot, or does not, answer it. But this is like life: agnostics are not impressed by Christianity—not, at least, until something other than words and common experience impresses them.

To the Christian *Karamazov* is a profoundly Christian work not simply in that it describes accurate and different human characteristics, but because the Christian characteristics are the only fruitful ones. Alyosha does not "answer" Ivan's arguments against the Church in words, because there is no answer in words. But Ivan is answered (in a sense) by what happens, because Ivan's characteristics lead to madness while Alyosha's bear fruit—although in an unexpected quarter, the group of boys round Ilusha and Kolya Krassotkin. This, again, is a true illumination of life. Christian readers should understand and marvel at this; while agnostics remain stuck with *The Grand Inquisitor*.

I have dwelt on *The Brothers Karamazov* because it seems to illustrate perfectly what I am trying to say about novels—that they should be true descriptions of life and illuminations of life, but that just because of this they will be understood in different ways by different people. It does not matter if a Christian novel is appreciated by agnostics for agnostic reasons (or even if it is taken to be hostile to Christianity as often happens with good Christian novels, for example *Brideshead Revisited* and *The Heart of the Matter*). This cannot be helped: a novel is not supposed to convert: and many insights of value are still transmitted. But what is apt to baffle the Christian novelist is that he is so often misunderstood or rather ignored by Christians—who do not want life illuminated as it is, but rather lit by rosy arc-lights.

There are, as has been suggested before, both good and bad reasons for this attitude. It is true that it is not a Christian's job to be endlessly examining the ramifications of life, but rather to be working to make them straight. (There is also a problem for the novelist here: a good Christian is normally a practical, obedient,

hardworking sort of person; a good novelist is usually a passive, watching, lonely sort of person: but he has to work out this one for himself.) It is true that no Christian's whole effort should be towards observing or describing—that there must be action and commitment. But there is hardly a danger of imagination becoming overloaded amongst Christians today. Rather there is a dangerous lack of this quality—a mass of exhortation, but little understanding.

So could not Christians give more attention to novels? Could they not see novels not only as entertainment, but as serious efforts to illuminate fundamentals which can be described in no other way? Above all could they not see them as the literary expression of a wider and vital attitude to life—that of wondering at creation, not being ashamed of it, not being outraged that it is not different from what it is? This should not be difficult for a Christian. It would almost seem to be necessary.

". . . I confess that I am glad that it is most unlikely I shall ever be required to assent to the Articles again, but if I were I think I should justify my assent, though with much searching of heart, by the following argument:

In my subscription I affirm that I have taken careful note of the Articles as an historical document which states the doctrinal position taken up by the Church of England at a creative period of its existence, defining its standpoint on the controversies of the time. And further, I could honestly add that, if I were compelled to answer the questions which the Articles attempt to answer and make the assumptions which their compilers evidently made, I would prefer the Anglican doctrinal statement to any of the others which were produced at the same time. But if I were permitted to elaborate my assent, I should have to go on to say that, in my opinion, many of the questions were misconceived and unanswerable and the presuppositions mistaken."

Dr. W. R. Matthews, *The Thirty-nine Articles*,
Hodder and Stoughton. 3s. 6d.

Christian Drama
or How to Give God a Bad Name

James Brabazon

The very phrase Christian Drama is in itself a standing invitation to constant argument between those who regard every human activity, particularly any kind of communication, as an opportunity for direct evangelism, and those who prefer to see in drama a different kind of activity, more comparable with building a house or making furniture, which can well be done to the glory of God without necessarily having a crucifix over the lintel or an invocation carved over the chair-back.

Like many such disputes, this one takes place more in the particular than in the general. That is to say, there is agreement in principle that "propagandist art" is a mistake and that theological exactitude should be regarded as less important than artistic merit. But what on earth does artistic merit mean in this context? This is where the trouble starts, and the confusion is such that the dramatised sermon is still surer of acceptance by practioners of religious drama than the work of art whose significance cannot be reduced to the simple doctrinal formula.

The reason is obvious. In a world where values and beliefs are awash, the band of the faithful prefer to have their feet on solid ground, and though this may be a little cramping it's preferable to being carried away by a tidal wave of heresy.

There was a cautious man of this kind who dug in the ground and hid his one talent and didn't get thanked for it. There was another man who walked on water as if it were dry land—and if we are in Christ we should at least attempt to do the same. You may ask "who are we to say we are in Christ?" I can only reply, "who are we to say we are not?" I believe that if we concern ourselves less with keeping our feet dry and more with going where it seems we ought to be, we shall very soon find that dry land rises up under us wherever we go.

Or, to solidify the metaphor a little, if we approach the question from the point of view of the professional man or woman of the theatre, we shall find that here, as presumably everywhere, the

words and acts of Christ are constantly relevant. This in fact is where theology lives and breathes.

Hamlet's remark about holding as 'twere the mirror up to nature is a professional's remark put into the mouth of an amateur, and it has proved useful to a great variety of theatrical points of view for two reasons—the extreme accuracy of the mirror image, and the extreme vagueness of the word nature.

The idea that the theatre is a mirror has recently found a new champion in Jean-Paul Sartre, who has suggested that the theatre's continuing vitality is due to the fact that society, like individuals, needs from time to time to glance in the mirror to see how it's getting on. In fact it needs the mirror to know what it looks like. And perhaps that it needs to recognise itself in this way in order to know what to think of itself.

This is a fairly serious matter, because mirrors have their own eccentricities, and if society—that is, people—see themselves in a distorting mirror they may begin to behave like their reflections and become distorted a little themselves. Nature, in fact, will imitate art. And this is an observable fact, from the small boys who emerge from Westerns brandishing six-guns to their elders and betters who for years modelled their cocktail talk and probably their adulteries on Noel Coward's heroes and heroines.

In order to have this sort of effect and importance, the image must firstly be very clear, and secondly must indeed truly reflect *something* in the consciousness of the audience—whether it's the Saturday morning kids howling when the posse of goodies set off after the baddies, or the pre-war middle classes basking in their reflected glory shown them by Miss Esther McCracken, or the fifth-century Athenians faced with "The Trojan Women". Whether more flattering or less, the picture is always recognisable, and this is a fundamental pre-requisite of all communication in the theatre.

But here lies the problem for the Christian—*which* part of the audience is reflected and recognised? And what is the meaning of that "nature" which Hamlet so wisely decided not to analyse any more closely?

For what we are up against here is the nature of man. Which for a Christian involves the nature of God, and instantly we are with first and last things. And these, no less, are what the theatre is to mirror.

For this mirror can either reflect the surface appearance or it can penetrate in depth. It can either tell you that you put on your mascara too thick and that your tongue is coated or it can act as a kind of X-ray of spiritual states, or ideally both. And this raises a practical problem, which faces all Christians from time to time, but dramatists in rather a special and constant way. If the theatre depends on recognition, how do we demonstrate sin to those who don't understand what it means? Or salvation to those who don't want it or who think it means going to Church? A radiologist may show you a picture which to him clearly means cancer, but to you it's an irregular series of blurs which might mean anything or nothing. In the past, the dramatist, the actor and the audience shared pre-supposions. But now? Looking at the sort of plays which run longest in London we are struck by a terrible thought. Suppose our audiences are only interested in their mascara and liver-pills, Scotch on the rocks and seducible secretaries. It looks very much like it. And so in despair many Christians fall back on the old false division—us, and the world. For us, plays about sin and separation, repentance and redemption. For the world, which doesn't understand or care, cocktail olives will have to do.

This is ridiculous. Because we don't understand the X-ray it doesn't mean we shan't have a pain. The world may not understand but it does care. It's the grossest arrogance to suppose that other people's souls are less capable of sin, suffering and salvation than ours. And the grossest idleness and cowardice to refuse to find out *how* these things are experienced, and felt, and described by people who don't use our system of notation. The problem is not one of "communication"—sacred word—but of imagination. How obvious this should be. And yet again and again phrases are invoked—in vacuo. The facts to which they refer are ignored. Again and again plays are written and performed in which totally inhuman beings are created in order to make some sanctified point—and holy hands are raised in delight—"the most moving experience—a truly converting performance." But how can anything be true to God, whom we have not seen, which is false to man, whom we have seen? Let's try to be faithful in a little thing—perhaps we may be entrusted with something bigger later on. The words of Christ rise up and condemn us.

And not only of Christ. The reflection of man's spirit is in

fact being tackled in the theatre—by agnostics and atheists. Robert Bolt, John Whiting and John Osborne are writing of the lives and deaths of prophets and martyrs. Sartre, Becket and Pinter write about people in hell. Not from text books, but from passionate personal concern. And the public, the world, supposedly so superficial, responds eagerly. The mirror is reflecting something that needed reflecting—human beings in extremis, in the toils of living —the picture that the Christians failed to give them.

Why, I wonder, when we have Christ's own technique to learn from? When Christ wanted to talk of salvation, or describe the Kingdom of Heaven, he told a story. And his characters were ordinary, recognisable, unreligious men and women, acting and suffering.

"What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

"Love God and love your neighbour."

"Who is my neighbour?"

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves."

Who was this man? Anyone special? No. Who was the man who saved him? Was he religious? What was his motivation? We've no idea. We know he was a man, we know where he came from, we know what he did. That's all.

And when the story was not so easy to understand, and the story-teller was asked for interpretations, the answer was "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear". The story itself in some way is the whole message. Interpret it and something is lost. And indeed His own whole life is the story of the actions of a human being and after two thousand years of interpretation the story is still the point, and those with ears to hear are still hearing it with greater or less success. In something of the same way, "Oedipus Rex", "Hamlet" and "Faust" continue to exist head and shoulders above and apart from the sum of their interpretations.

For this is the point—a man is always more than the sum of his attributes. An action is always more than the sum of its motivations. And a story is always more than the sum of its interpretations. Those who have ears to hear recognise and understand them, without explanation, by sympathy, by intuitive response. Explanations only diminish them. This is a meaning of mystery.

The trite conclusion is this, that the true business of the

Christian in the theatre is simply to try to tell interesting stories about interesting people. That is, interesting both to himself and to his audience. The stories must image for the audience their own human state, reflected in a Christian mirror—which is to say a true mirror, so we believe.

The plays of the agnostics reflect truth, but it is a partial truth, it lacks grace. It's often very sound on the wailing and gnashing of teeth, but knows nothing of the Kingdom of Heaven. And perhaps one criterion of a Christian play might be that one could introduce it by "The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto . . . " On second thoughts I withdraw that—we shall instantly be back on interpretation.

But to be a Christian mirror—this is a frightening responsibility. We all, I think, know instinctively that what we are and what we believe will emerge inevitably from what we try to do honestly. It will emerge from every act of selection that we make, and when we create selection is continuous, from the moment when the playwright selects his story and his characters to the moment when the author selects the timing and inflection of a line. And we are doubtful, we must be, of the quality of the truth that emerges from us, flawed as it is by our own limitations.

The only answer to this is that we must have the humility to be seen as we are, and to lay ourselves open to correction and help and above all to the Holy Spirit. And this is a difficult matter, because anyone who has tried to create honestly will know that the work one conceives does have its own legitimate demands, the thwarting of which will simply destroy the whole work. But in listening to criticism it's very hard to distinguish between these demands and one's own *amour-propre*, which likes to reject all criticism.

The *wrong* answer, when we are doubtful of our own quality, is to play safe by retelling the Passion or the lives of the Saints, thinking to be carried by the certainty of the subject. For here also our selections will reveal us in all our deficiencies and we shall have communicated a flavour of falsehood exactly where we should least want to do so. Which is the fault and condemnation of at least 95 per cent of "religious" drama.

These thoughts are not constructive. They are an attempt to clear away some of the irrelevancies which I believe clutter up the whole conception of Christian Drama, and which deter most

honest citizens (Christians included) from having anything to do with it. What I would like to do is to put the matter back where I believe it belongs—in the creative imagination of man, given him by God and powered by the Holy Spirit, though often distorted in its passage through the psyche. The task is comparable with the task of artists and Saints, to annihilate ourselves, to purify ourselves, to clean the mirror, to reflect the actions of man, the brother of Christ, as he goes about his business accepting and rejecting Grace. The intellect must of course guide and craftsmanship must shape, but the motive source of all theatrical power and might is the wind that blows where it lists; to whose communion we must open ourselves in order that it may create, through us, that communion of experience of truth which is the proper function of the theatre.

The Mercat Theatre Trust

LENNOX MILNE

More drama is reaching more people than ever before. About forty plays are produced on television screens every week. About fourteen plays go out on "steam" radio—and have a large audience according to B.B.C. Listener Research. Over twenty West End "straight" plays appear in the advertisement columns of the Sunday newspapers. And in the so-called provinces a number of theatres remain open, and a number of people see plays six nights in the week. The number of films on view throughout the country is, of course, impossible to assess.

The old truth that audiences identify themselves with characters in plays remains a truth, even though they see three plays a week; even though they have a bite of supper while seeing them; even though members of the audience go and put the kids to bed and come back again. The effect of drama is powerful and at the same time subtle because the audience is often unaware of it. There has been much publicity and criticism of "plays of violence", plays depicting cruelty, sadism and the cruder forms of sex. There has

been no public criticism of the countless plays seen on film and television screens and on the stage which are innocent enough on the grounds of crime, violence and the rest, but which show a purely materialistic view of life and take no account whatever of the fact we are all taught at an early age, i.e., that we have a soul and a body and the soul is by far the more important; which take no account of the fact that there is some motivating power behind the universe, let alone the fact of Christianity. The stories, themes, angles, comments of many plays are indubitably related to life but omit any reference to that which gives life any meaning. This is not a plea for religious plays or plays with an explicit religious theme, but, at the least, for plays in which some spiritual awareness and religious belief is implicit in *some* of the characters.

Reflections of this kind, I imagine, were at the back of the mind of Fr. James Christie, S.J., when, after years of observation and discussion on the subject, he produced first the idea, then the fact, of The Mercat Theatre Trust. It was formed in July of last year under the Chairmanship of Sir John MacEwen, Bart. Its declared object is "to promote the writing and production of plays having a background of Christian principles and morality". Although the idea was formed in the mind of a Roman Catholic priest, its objects are Christian in the widest sense of the word. Although the Trust is based in Scotland, its activities are already reaching all over Great Britain. The reason is that during the Edinburgh Festival over a period of eleven years Fr. Christie was responsible for professional productions at the Lauriston Hall. (Notable among these was "The Strong Are Lonely" with Sir Donald Wolfit.)

The Trust aims at the unknown or non-established playwright holding sympathetic views. (The established writer is better equipped to place his own work.) It plans to try to place plays which are considered suitable and of a sufficiently high professional standard where they seem most appropriate and where they can be seen by the largest audience possible to the medium and to the type of play.

The Trust has a working committee and a professional director who read and assess each play sent in. An unexpectedly large number of plays has been received since the first announcement in the Press in August, 1960, with an equally unexpectedly high percentage of plays of high professional quality and containing the required ingredient of "Christian principles and morality". In reading these plays the committee has discovered at least one enlightening fact; this is that

inexperienced writers are apt to confuse a "good", i.e. moral, subject with a "good" i.e. artistically satisfying, technically sound play; they do not realise that the lives of the saints, for example, do not in general make good subjects for plays; nor that playwriting, though it often deals in the currency of everyday speech, is a highly technical, as well as artistic, job.

The Director of the Trust will be pleased to answer enquiries. (The Trust is not an agency in the usual sense of the word and indeed will call upon the services of established agencies.) Enquiries should be made to The Director, The Mercat Theatre Trust, 29 Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, 3.

"*Curiously enough, the most completely successful professional production at the* (*Edinburgh*) *Festival in fact took place on the Fringe, and was not anything bold or ambitious at all, but the Mercat Theatre Trust's production of a new play by Mr. Maurice McLoughlin,* A Letter from the General. *This is not a great play, or even a notably original one: it is a drama, with incidental humours and excitements, about a group of nuns in 'an Eastern country'* (*presumably China*) *shortly after a Communist takeover, and their attempts to smuggle out a German priest who is being hunted by the government. It is the sort of thing Dame Flora Robson used to have big successes in a few years back* (*and, indeed, one could easily see her as the resourceful Mother Superior*), *with no pretensions to do much more than entertain, but Mr. McLoughlin's craftsmanship is splendidly confident and assured, the laughs and the gasps come infallibly in the right places, and the excellent cast of Scottish actors have precisely the measure of their author and their* (*predominantly local*) *audience. If there is room, and surely there still must be, for good, straightforward commercial theatre, this is just the sort of thing to fill it to the credit and profit of all concerned.*"

TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT, 8*th September*, 1961

Religion . . . and all that Jazz

Rex Walford

Warner Brothers effectively sabotaged the cause of precise musical semantics when they staked their ailing fortunes on the first feature talking picture and called it "The Jazz Singer" back in October 1927. It may have been a success for Al Jolson, for the Warner studios, and for the film in general, but it probably retarded musical education several decades in the process. From that time onwards (and indeed in less spectacular ways beforehand also) "jazz" has been used as a term—often derogatory—to describe all kinds of music from the schmaltz of Guy Lombardo to the frenetic rock 'n roll of Bill Haley. In most cases the application of the term has been many musical miles off the mark.

Now that the Church has got round to looking at twentieth-century mass musical culture it has fallen into the same gigantic bear-trap; the first efforts to bring genuine "pop music" into ecclesiastical orbit—the settings of the liturgy written by Fr. Geoffrey Beaumont and others—have by some been identified by the term "jazz mass". This, despite the fact that Beaumont himself rejected the term, and that the later practitioners of the art call themselves quite clearly, "The twentieth-century light music group".

There is about as much relationship between a Beaumont hymn tune and authentic jazz as there is between Beethoven and Irving Berlin. An equation between the work of those trying to infuse some popular mass culture music into the church's tradition, and of those concerned with the understanding of a developing contemporary art-form is doing less than justice to either. It is too often made, however, by those whose acquaintance with jazz is so facile as to believe that its essential characteristics are a trombone-player slurring his notes and wearing sunglasses, or a pianist stomping his feet at a battered and naked bar-room piano.

The truth of the matter is that jazz is not a "popular" art in the way that square dancing or the strip cartoon is—although in this age an increasing number of people are coming to understand the distinct musical language which it speaks. Jazz has grown up rapidly since 1900, largely the product of an urbanised civilisation with its roots therefore very firmly in the environment of this century. It

is a particular form of musical composition based on collective improvisation which does not follow the "rules" of classical musical tradition, and in which the players themselves become the composers.

Yet in its more mature forms it is neither undemanding enough to be "mass-popular" on one hand nor yet "respectable" enough to be ecclesiastically acceptable on the other. Unless it is hopelessly escapist, however, the Church cannot go on indefinitely ignoring a complete art-form, or stupidly condemning it as music of the Devil. Jazz has achieved enough stature these days to lose its role as musical step-child of the arts, and demand serious aesthetic consideration. And this ought inevitably to pose the question of its relationship to the fine arts used to the glory of God.

Perhaps one of the first false impressions to dispel is the one that jazz is only shallow music. Certainly the days of its birth in New Orleans were not flooded with intellectual profundity—but what baby spouted an encyclopaedia of meaning at birth? Jazz is much more than just the early vocabulary of Kid Ory or Buddy Bolden; complex emotional and intellectual statements made today by groups such as the Modern Jazz Quartet or the Dave Brubeck Quartet are on the frontiers of its progression.

In an age when the lack of sensitivity is one of the most crippling problems in the effective presentation of the Gospel there is evidence that jazz as a musical form speaks deeply to a great many people. It digs deep to expose the existentialist in all of us. A friend of mine (who previously knew little of jazz) came back from the film of the Newport Festival, "Jazz on a summer's day" saying in bemused wonder, "That is the most *human* film I have ever seen". Sensitivity does not necessarily lead to religious experience; but an art-form which, in 1960, gets deep down into the basic hopes and fears of de-personalised mass-society man is scarcely one which the Church can afford to ignore.

But there are other arguments used against it too. Some say that it is "not tested-by-time", as if this and not "tested-by-God" was the criteria for the fitness of things.

I have also heard it suggested that jazz is too secular in its associations, "really rather primitive and degrading, you know". This kind of musical apartheid exists usually within those who know least about the social history and subsequent development of jazz, and is all the more difficult to explain away because of that. But if something is so secular as to resist its transformation and redemption

in the service of God, what on earth has happened to our belief in the doctrine of the Incarnation?

Another group of opponents consider that anything relying on a rhythmic framework is somehow incongruous in church—relying on canons of taste which are themselves blithely unaware of the incongruity of much of modern church music in the fabric of everyday living. They must also surely be unaware of the work of people like Margaret Palmer Fisk in the U.S.A., whose dance interpretations of prayer and hymn with "rhythmic choirs" have achieved a maturity and a reverence that is both greatly moving and impressive in the context of worship. One of the Beaumont-Appleford "pop religious songs" reinforces the point:

> "There's a rhythm in the way, God has given every day
> Every morning and evening as a new creation, telling the Glory of God."

And yet again, another school of thought points to the comparative brevity of jazz statements and speaks slightingly of it as "mere musical journalism". Spurred on by events as diverse as Oberammergau and liturgical revision the Church has recently been in some danger of assuming that length equals depth; but jazz, like good prayer is short, and like good prayer (and good journalism) it has its moments of complete truth.

But, having argued all this, the question remains, "Is jazz able to meet the musical requirements of Christian worship?" Certainly it was once—for its Christian origins are rooted deep in its earliest tradition. It has been suggested by some jazz historians that early New Orleans was a significant outlet of revivalist religion from the Deep South that sought expression in other than conventional forms. The playing of a clarinet or trombone has been likened to the glossolalia of the Early Church, a kind of "undercover" religious experience for some musicians.

But if this seems all too painfully crude or hypothetical, perhaps it is salutary to point to the increasing use in recent years of modern jazz as an accompaniment to modern (and far from unsophisticated) poetry; a fusion of art forms that would surely surprise those who still think of jazz as the kindergarten of the musical world.

In America, the first steps in experiment have been taken by a jazzman named Ed Summerlin, who has prepared a jazz background to the Methodist Order of Common Prayer. The music was first presented at a service on the Boston University campus in February

1960 and has been repeated several times since. Like many first attempts (the Beaumont Folk Mass, for example) it is not completely successful, but it does at least demonstrate that jazz need not be either cacophonous or banal when used as a setting for worship.

Summerlin's experiment opens the door for some enterprising and far-sighted patron to commission a real "jazz mass" for the near future. It is surely not too much to hope that the expression of feeling in the Agnus Dei or the Sanctus can be made the base of legitimate jazz interpretation of a theme, and subsequent improvisation, which may help a worshipping congregation to convey their aspirations to God.

Indeed, jazz becomes peculiarly suitable for this, for with its mixture of theme and improvisation it mirrors the Anglican concept of public prayer—a liturgical base that allows more extempore thoughts. Even the very relationship of jazz musicians themselves, conversing in music about a theme, conveys something of the inter-relationship, and interdependence of man which is at the heart of a true theology of the Creation.

The fact that these days a Byrd in three parts is worth none in the pew ought to set our church musicians thinking. True, it should not be simply music that draws people to worship; but our present situation is that congregations are fossilising musical tastes, and effectively isolating themselves by perpetuating styles that are not even remotely connected with the general musical culture of the world outside, which the Church exists to serve. If an average non-churchgoer strays into a church by some mischance on a typical Sunday, he feels like a tentative ambassador to a foreign musical culture; for no longer does the music of the church completely represent the music of society at its best offered up to God in all its facets, and in all its glory.

So let us hope that as jazz continues to mature in expression and take its place amongst the arts it will find some point of contact with the church. True jazz is not broadly "popular" culture (whatever the misrepresentations and misconceptions of those who wouldn't know Billy Fury from Billy Cotton anyway); but it *is* an art-form. What Beaumont and the "pop music" practitioners are presently doing for our parish churches, jazz may yet do for our cathedral . . . and thus add a new and living and wholly appropriate stream to the church's musical heritage.

Letter from Nigeria

Cecil Northcott

I have recently driven two hundred miles through the palm and banana forest of the vast Niger delta area from Onitsha to Port Harcourt and the predominant memory is of churches and schools which line the highways. It is just a century since Christianity pushed its way inland through the watery mass of this delta between the Cross River and the lordly Niger, and its sharpest critics would hardly deny the Christian church a modicum of praise for its accomplishments.

Without the astonishing and self-denying investment of lives and treasure from the churches of the British Isles—Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian—Eastern Nigeria would not be the lively and invigorating place it is. On the day of my journey Dr. Azikiwe was proclaimed Governor-General of Nigeria, and I noticed in the town of Umuahia a poster which read, "Now for our Africa."

High above the Niger stands the Anglican Cathedral of Onitsha and down by the waterfront stands the Roman Catholic one, both of them the headquarters of a wide ranging system of education and church life which has shaped the way of Nigerian life. Over ninety per cent of the management of the educational machine of the Eastern Region lies still in the hands of the churches. The official education administrator likes to refer to this management as belonging to "the voluntary agencies" but the Nigerian, in his passion for education, knows that the standards are finest in the church schools, and he puts the church first amongst the institutions which will go on to serve Nigeria now that she is independent.

The Anglican Church has recently carved out of its huge Niger Diocese two new ones—Owerri and Niger Delta with a Nigerian as bishop of the Delta. The same church has probably gone further than any church in its devolving of responsibility into Nigerian hands. Political independence followed very lamely in the wake of the church which has had Nigerians in leadership for many years, and the affection in which the two ex-patriate bishops, Bishop Paterson of the Niger, and Bishop Cockin of Owerri, are held is an excellent sample of ecumenical churchmanship.

I saw the same spirit in practical operation in Trinity College Umuahia where the Anglicans, Methodists and Presbyterians are now training their ministers in a union seminary, and by so doing are gradually preparing the ground for a United Church of Nigeria. To some observers this is the soundest method of promoting Christian unity and is worth whole phalanx of conferences on the subject. High on the ridge overlooking an endless sweep of the delta forest forty men are being trained for the ministry, and are learning by regular worship and study to be a united team serving one church.

Down the forest pathways the children flock in their thousands to the schools along the delta highways carrying their books and ink-pots on their heads pursuing the foreign language of English with an incredible zeal and in many cases efficiency. The eastern Nigerian is skilled at passing examinations which he misguidedly imagines turns him into an educated man able to demand an educated man's position and emoluments.

It is just here that the Christian Church appears to have its biggest task in front of it in Nigeria. If it succeeded in instructing the nations of northern Europe in the basic "three Rs" and then gradually led them into the pathways of true education which flowered in poetry, art and literature why can it not do the same for this astonishing slice of Africa? Here is a land which has the liveliest groups of all Africa's peoples, and the Christian church has taken strong root amongst them. Like the old Europe this new Africa has Islam at its doors, and the threat of paganism from within the dark forest is forever a deadly one .But the combined threats of Islam and paganism only served to stiffen and stimulate the life of Christian Europe. May they not do the same for Nigeria?

I sat in the hot twilight in an African house in Onitsha with a group of young writers who all want to write and to be published. They are eager to say what they think in their own tongue of Ibo and to say it also in English. Their's is a double allegiance. They are men of two worlds. The only common bond they have is a Christian education and a practising churchmanship which in medieval Europe would have landed them all into the monastic life. But this is modern Africa and their presence is a measure of what Christianity has achieved in these forests and how much more there is to be harvested.

How to be the Scum of the Earth

ROGER TENNANT

"We are treated as the scum of the earth, the dregs of humanity, to this very day", is how St. Paul (*New English Bible*) describes the image projected by the Christian minister in his day. Judging from Paul Ferris' *Observer* article last year, it seems that it has not changed much, though we can hardly add, as St. Paul does, that "we go hungry and thirsty and in rags, we are roughly handled, we wander from place to place: we wear ourselves out working with our hands".

If we were wandering from place to place and wearing ourselves out working with our hands, we would probably be too busy to worry about what sort of image we projected, but as respectability has overtaken us somewhere on the way, and we have been washed and fed, installed in vicarages, and strictly forbidden to wander from place to place, we tend to worry about what the world is thinking of us, and it appears that what it is thinking of us is not very much.

Is this just because the world cannot see the "inward glory", or is it because we just do not know quite what we *are* supposed to be doing? There is an inward side that only the Christian believer can understand, but there is also, I think, a certain uncertainty in our own minds about who we are, and what we should be doing. Perhaps this uncertainty is itself a sign of hope.

The Protestant Pastor is sent to preach, and though he may be less certain than of old as to "what shall I preach?" if he has a gift for it, he will preach something and find fulfilment. The Roman Catholic priest is an officer of a successful organisation, who teaches what the Church teaches. He usually settles down to a comfortable marriage with the Church, without being particularly joyful or particularly miserable. He has both comradeship and status.

If the Anglican minister is willing to be unashamedly an Evangelical "preacher", he will be condemned to a sort of Non U status at Anglican gatherings, but he will be offered firm hand clasps amongst the Evangelical International and receive inspirational messages from earnest people in Peru or the Philippines. If he is uncompromisingly "Catholic" he will be admitted to a small but

fervent free-masonry with its own myserious signs and fellowship. If he is one of the well-meaning majority, he will know a little of the vocabulary of both ends, he will have a few firm convictions about the rightness of Anglicanism, and the wrongness of modern England, he will have some hobby which may or may not be ecclesiastical, but is probably the only thing that brings any real warmth into his voice. He will have about thirty communicants at 8 a.m., and about sixty at evensong. He is a "vicar".

This is not quite good enough: we all know that, but where is the answer? The only people with a confident answer are those who say he should be more professional, more "spiritual". He should get up early, speak with authority, hear confessions, direct souls, say offices, and train a group of instructed penitents. He will play more intensively with his company of fifty the game that his Roman brother does more light-heartedly with five hundred or five thousand. There is an opening for this sort of religion in England today, a limited opening. But is it New Testament Christianity? I rather think that it is not, but if you expect me to say what New Testament Christianity is in two hundred words, you are expecting too much. I can only recommend the New Testament, quite a good book, and worth anyone's time to have a look at.

It contains a collection of stories about a man. There is very little we can say about him, except that he is certainly a man. He does not wear any uniform or have any status. He is not a rabbi or a priest or a scribe. Faced with the Pharisees, who are very spiritual and say a lot of offices, or the Sadducees who are very liberal and hold a lot of offices, he tells us to beware of the leaven of both. All his words and actions have a sort of light-hearted spontaneity that is quite different from the earnest soul-savers at one end or the earnest penitents at the other, or the unexciting centre.

Are the joy and hope of the New Testament found in the Church, or only obscured and contradicted by the Church? There are many of us who have found them there, but they could surely be made a little easier to find, not so systematically obscured and contradicted by our administration, common sense, and "spirituality"?

He says a lot of shocking things that we have never taken seriously. He does not "comfort" the sick: he is angry with sickness: he cures it or leaves it alone. He does not worry about sin: he forgives, forgets and banishes it. He does not lead his disciples in "meditations", but he makes them think. He does not talk about "spiritual values"—

the word "spiritual" does not occur in the Gospels, and it would be very good for our "spiritual health" if the word was banished from our vocabulary for ten years at least. He does not want to make disciples, but to discourage them, he does not appease, please, and publicly relate: he offends.

In face he is a very enigmatic and disturbing figure, and we can hardly be blamed if we have both ignored him and changed him. But he persists in the Gospels, and still walks right out of them, and that is perhaps our biggest problem—how to get rid of him. Rome has chosen the way that Doestoevsky explains so adequately in the parable of the Grand Inquisitor. Noncomformity has made him into a hearty young teetotaller. If Anglicans are willing to go on wrestling with him, and stop Establishing him—only then can we say that we have any hope, any share in his hope.

By the time the Galilean had conquered the Roman Empire he was, as the poet remarked, pale. By the time he had legally established the Church of England, he was deathly white and rather resembled those soft-footed people whom common soldiers refer to as "creeping jesuses".

All this is not very constructive, you will say. He came to bring a sword, and swords are not constructive. Nor is fire, which he came to cast on the earth. It is not very constructive to go hungry and thirsty, in rags, and wander from place to place. How about being destructive for a time, pull everything down that obscures him, be thrown out of the synagogue and dragged to the edge of the cliff on which the suburb is built, be more angry than the Angries and more beat than the Beatniks, turn the world upside down until we are definitely rejected as the "scum of the earth, the dregs of humanity"? Then, perhaps, we can begin to laugh at ourselves, and bring a little Galilean joy into the tired world.

"The Thirty-Nine Articles"

Being extracts from the book of that name by Dr. W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Pauls, to be published by Hodder and Stoughton on 12th October at 3s. 6d.

"It is perhaps a salutary indolence which makes us reluctant very often to put two and two together, but it is not salutary to refuse to put Thirty-Nine Articles together and ask what they come to. Surely it is a question of the utmost importance to enquire what picture of the universe and its Creator emerges when we take the Articles seriously as meaning what they quite clearly say. It is, I suggest, frankly an appalling one. It would seem beyond dispute that, in the belief of the authors, the overwhelming majority of the human race past, present and future have been, are, and will be, born predestined to eternal damnation, and it follows inevitably that they were created in order to be damned. We may wonder indeed how those who held such doctrines to be revealed truth could, at the same time, believe that God is love. We should not, however, accuse the Articles themselves of inconsistency because, though Article 1 asserts that God is of infinite goodness, there is no sentence in the whole thirty-nine which asserts or implies that he is love or to be thought of as our Father in Heaven. I do not purpose, however, to criticise the theology of our Articles, but simply to state it. My aim is to expound them and to ask if any candid person could maintain that they represent the mind of our Church today. I would go further and express the opinion that it would be difficult to find any intelligent churchmen who would accept the Articles in their plain meaning as a statement of their understanding of the religion of Christ."

* * *

". . . But I chiefly regret that the Commission on Doctrine was allowed to lapse when it had delivered its Report. If it could be revived with members drawn from the new generation of theologian and scholars, it could render outstanding service. A body of learned men, in touch with contemporary thought and representing all traditions in the Anglican Communion, who were always in session, seeking truth and speaking it to one another in love might be a source of power and light for which the Bishops, and indeed the

whole Church, would thank God. Its members would have no authority except that of their learning and religious understanding; no one would be tempted to imagine that they were infallible, but they could advise the Church with knowledge and bear witness to the unity which already exists while promoting its increase. From such a body might come that new statement of the faith in which we could all agree.

"I look forward to a time when a candidate for ordination will no longer be confronted with a series of theological propositions to which any well-informed man can assent only with reservation and reserves, but with a statement of the gospel which he is to preach, which he can sign with uplifted heart and clear mind."

* * *

"There have been many attempts to recall the nation to religion. None of them has been without some success, but none has left an enduring mark or started a growing movement. They have been 'shots in the arm', rather than an access of new life. If we pay our fellow countrymen the compliment of taking them to be rational beings, we may well suppose that many of them were conscious of a logical weakness in our appeal. After all there is something faintly ludicrous in the spectacle of a body of evangelists marching towards the conversion of England with an official statement of doctrine which they have to explain away, or at least to keep in the background.

"I am convinced that the formulation of new Articles of Religion, which will express our real belief and be intelligible to those whom we hope to convert, is an absolutely necessary preliminary to any hopeful effort to evangelise our people. We agree that only the power of the Holy Spirit can enable us to undertake this urgent enterprise and continue in it with resolution and patience. When we pray for this grace let us remember that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and understanding."

An attempt to rewrite the thirty-nine articles has been made by Dr. C. B. Moss. It is entitled "The Thirty-Nine Articles Revised" and is published by Mowbrays at 2s. 6d.

Mysticism and Philosophy

W. T. STACE

In his latest book the author of *Religion and The Modern Mind* and *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy* investigates the question of what bearing 'mystical experience' has upon the more important problems of philosophy. 21*s*

Religion in the Soviet Union

WALTER KOLARZ

Religion is an essential part of the life of every nation, Communist Russia not excepted. This book takes us behind the façade of the 'official' Russia and shows us the 'unofficial' Russia, the Russia of the believers of all religions about whom little is known in the West.

Illustrated 50*s*

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Swedish Church Art

PETER J. CHANDLER

One of the joys of a visit to Sweden is the feast of modern architecture which the country provides. The excellence of its interior furnishings, also, has long been renowned; and recently Swedish table-ware and fabrics have been accorded the same recognition abroad. Happily, the Swedish churches are able to share in the artistic developments which the country's prosperity has inspired and patronised.

The revived Gothic of the ecclesiastical designers and furnishers, if it ever had any vogue in the Church of Sweden, is quite out. And a good thing too. Instead, there are to be found, in all kinds of churches, remarkable and generally praiseworthy examples of modern equipment and contemporary styles of furnishing. Naturally enough, some of the results are highly controversial. This indicates that the artists and designers are tackling a living subject in a challenging way; they are not content to lay the dead hand of conventional pretty-prettiness upon the churches of their land. And in many cases the effect is pleasing and inspiring. There is clear evidence of good taste, even if it is too astringent for the palate of many people of the older school.

A few examples may be given from among many. At Oxelösund, on the Baltic coast, a new industrial town and port is rapidly extending. The opportunity was seized to erect a church of unusual design and construction: it might be mistaken for a large lighthouse. The symbolism is deliberate—and effective. Inside, it is a building which rapidly grows on the worshipper, despite its unconventional features. The reredos is a stylised ship in metal, the stained glass windows depict workmen in contemporary garb; the sanctuary carpet, the chandeliers, the baptistery, are all related to the theme of proclaiming the Gospel in twentieth-century circumstances by twentieth-century means.

Wonders have been worked with old churches, too. Those who knew Växjö Cathedral, in Småland, before its recent face-lift say that it was not a very inspiring building, despite its venerable age. The interior has now been completely restored and refurnished. It is a model of light, grace and dignity in modern style. The sanctuary is now lit by the rich colours of a modern stained glass east window;

the altar is dominated by a vast bronze cross—there is no escaping the centrality and the pain of the Cross in Lutheran worship; and the new font and pulpit balance each other at either side of the junction of nave and chancel. These improvements have not been achieved without arousing fiercely conflicting arguments: there are never wanting Christians of any demonination for whom any change is a change for the worse!

Another medieval Swedish cathedral, Linköping, has in recent years aroused a storm of controversy by commissioning a series of huge paintings to fill the apsidal east end of the sanctuary. It is a bold juxtaposition of ancient and modern which has exasperated some beholders. Others, however, claim that the boldness is justified: no visitor or worshipper can fail to see that the Risen Christ is Lord in Linköping Cathedral. By contrast, and on a comparatively minute scale, may be mentioned the frankly contemporary crucifix in the chapel of the conference house of the diocese of Strängnäs at Stjärnholm. There is no other figure or ornament in the chapel, and the simplicity of the surroundings stresses the stark and stylised reality of the Figure on the cross.

One more example shall suffice. The ancient "Norman" type of village church at Gammla Hjelmseryd, now the spiritual centre of a thriving "High Church" institute in the heart of the country, was in a nearly derelict condition a few years ago. It has been tastefully restored and is now the admiration of all who visit it. The walls are whitewashed throughout; the coloured pulpit and the windows provide almost the only relief. Over the west door is a modern window in vivid coloured glass. The chancel arch points forward to the mystery of the darker chancel, but the altar itself, in the tiny apsidal sanctuary, is lit by three small round-headed windows. The modern cross and candlesticks are in beaten silver. The only form of lighting is candles; and at night, when they are all flickering for compline, the church looks its most attractive. At High Mass and Communion (the Swedish title for a sung eucharist) it is at its most colourful. For the celebrant wears handwoven vestments, in soft but striking colours. The craftswoman who designed and wove them lives in the parish, and she has made them harmonise with the altar hangings and the chancel carpet. It is true that the foam-rubber kneelers of the communion rail are very comfortable; but the Sacrifice which is offered at the altar is as disturbing to complacency in Sweden as it is in England.

Crucifix in Chapel, Stjarnholm

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Silver Ewer by Wiwen Nilsson

Silver Communion Set
designed and made by Sigurd
Persson in St. Botvid's Church,
Oxelosund

Window by Bo Beskow in Vaxjo Cathedral

Liturgical Lessons from Paris

Bernard Croft

On the Second Sunday after Easter I was in Paris again and went to Mass several times over a period of ten days—at St. Severin and St. Sulpice, famous churches of the Liturgical Movement in Paris. These churches which have given not only a new look but a new-meaning to the Mass never fail to fascinate me, as one brought up as a boy in the old Anglo-Catholic tradition here at home and at such churches on the Continent as St. George's, Paris.

Again I was struck especially by two things. The sensible *shortness* —rather than length—of the service; and the way in which all present take their proper part in the Mass.

Plus, I might add, two other things—the way in which the people throng round the altar, seeking the nearest seats to the sanctuary; and the way in which they all join in the Amens. So different from what happens here at home in most of our churches.

People sometimes ask, What is wrong with 1662 as it stands, anyway? And one of the answers, surely, is that the Holy Communion service as we have it there is too long; even when the Preparation is not added before and the Last Gospel at the end.

Another answer is that the order of the different part of the service is unfortunate and does not take into consideration that some people present are not intending to communicate.

At both these Parish churches the Preparation is said together by all present. The weekday server wears his ordinary clothes. The celebrant at St. Severin, though not at St. Sulpice, stands behind the altar. A layman reads the Propers, the Epistle and the Gospel in the vulgar tongue. And there is nothing equivalent to our Prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church, Invitation, General Confession, Absolution, Comfortable Words and Prayer of Humble Access. A general-confession has been made, of course, in the Preparation, and an absolution given.

The Mass moves swiftly (but audibly throughout—with the help of microphones) from collect, epistle and gospel to consecration,

communion, thanksgiving, blessing and last-gospel; with the preparation before and also, on occasions, the Gloria.

At both churches there is a pleasing absence of people walking about during the Mass, or other services going on nearby; or people carrying on with their own private devotions (rosaries and what-have-you) and not joining in with the great corporate act of worship.

There is, somewhere, the Reserved Sacrament, but people kneel to say their prayers (and nowadays you do not get some kneeling, some standing, some sitting) at the time of the Mass where the service is being said or sung; and confessions are heard at quite separate times.

A feature of both churches (and of most R.C. churches in French and Belgian towns today) is the literature table where most attractively produced magazines are on sale.

There are still, of course, many churches in Paris where the old order prevaileth—in Notre Dame, for instance. Mass is muttered at the far end of the church by a celebrant with his back to you. ("Couldn't hear a word you said this morning, father." "That's all right, son; I wasn't talking to you." But that sort of thing soon makes the Mass a mime and certainly not our greatest act of corporate worship). And there are still churches on the Continent (particularly in Italy) where another Mass is being said at the same time in a nearby chapel, somebody is getting married a little further away and people are popping in and out of confessional boxes on every hand. But the Reformation spirit is moving in the R.C. church across the Channel—more rapidly, it would seem, than in R.C. churches here at home. And through the Liturgical Movement the common people are being brought back to Christ and His Church.

As Anglicans of course we start off with the advantage of already having the whole service in the vulgar tongue; and more and more churches are bringing their altars forward (not necessarily so that the celebrant can stand behind,) and bridging, literally as well as otherwise, the great gulf still too often fixed between the priest at the altar and the people in the back rows of the pews.

Happy is the man who has a church where he can make reasonable liturgical experiments—the incumbent of a church where there are plenty of other churches around to which people can go if they don't like what he is doing! I am in that position here as vicar of St. Jude's, Birmingham—a church recently saved from being declared redundant, to stand as a city church in a new city centre.

For my first six months here we had the 1928 Liturgy. But none of us found it wholly satisfactory. Most people liked the new version of the Prayer for the Church and felt the order of the different parts of the mass had been put at least partly right. Now we are trying this:

Preparation (said by all, cards provided), Our Father, Prayer for Purity.
Kyries (in Greek—ninefold).
Collect, Epistle, Gospel (Creed on certain days, also Gloria, at end).
Offertory (always including a collection).
Prayer for the Church (revised version sometimes).
Sursum Corda, Sanctus, Benedictus.
Consecration Prayer plus Prayer of Oblation plus Our Father.
The Pax followed by Prayer of Humble Access said by all who are going to communicate.
Agnus Dei—Communion.
Ablutions, Prayer of Thanksgiving, Blessing.
Last Gospel (said aloud, all standing).

As at St. Severin this weekday mass takes about 25 minutes with a dozen or so communicants—and the words of administration are not said to each.

We have not, as yet, brought our high-altar lower down and nearer the people. Nor do our servers like wearing "ordinary clothes" at the altar, even on weekdays. Nor do we at present go in for Offertory processions. I refuse to murmur the Propers to myself at the altar; the day will come, I hope, when they can be said aloud by a layman, or, better still, by all present. I do not think the Matins-Mass-merger is a good idea. People should of course be willing to spend more time at church, but, let's face it, there is a demand for shorter services. People go to church more frequently nowadays we must remember.

Some Anglican Writing

C. J. STRANKS

Anglican Devotion

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J. H. SHORTHOUSE

John Inglesant in England

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SCM PRESS

Comment

R.M. writes:

Public sympathy has been with the teachers in their demands for more pay, but when they threaten to strike people are shocked and alienated. How disgraceful for teachers to strike, they say. What an example to set the children.

Dissatisfaction with all the govenment settlements has been because of the complicated system of allowances. These allowances are designed to give better and more responsible teachers more. Obviously a good idea if it can be fairly done. But large numbers of teachers, who are not very good, and not very hard working, get the low "basic scale" and the government is prepared to accept and recognise this situation—lots of poor teachers—and continue to spend education money in buildings rather than people.

So the strike is not just about money. It is the tangible aspect of this basic problem. Is the country content with large numbers of teachers it values at less than policemen?

Grammar school leavers mostly go to industry. The less able are encouraged to take up teaching. This is the common pattern. Teacher training colleges ask ridiculously low qualifications, fail very few on interview, and the two (now raised to three) years spent there are almost a complete waste of time—complete except for the six weeks actual teaching practice. When they leave, each college has its own passing out exam, and passes its own students, 99 per cent naturally. There is no outside exam, or anything approaching a University Board. So young teachers are flung with less ceremony than curates and far less training into the schools where there are most vacancies, often the most difficult ones. Of course the minority of graduate teachers are better off, but all, graduate or not graduate, who go into the strike, have this basic problem expressed or unexpressed at heart.

In good capitalist society of course one should not strike. Instead one finds another outlet for one's resources and of course lots of teachers could find more lucrative employment in business or manual work. But *because* they care about education and their own vocations they face the possibility of strike action (with its own hardships), rather than leaving the profession altogether.

C.M. writes:

For most preachers, Armistice Sunday has long proved an annually increasing embarrassment, and only a shrinking regiment of bemedalled canons can still sound the trumpet in a major key. Now Battle of Britain Sunday is beginning to share the same fate. With Panzers in Pembrokeshire, and national sovereignty obsolescent, pulpit paeans for the Few jar. Pacifist parsons can presumably improve the occasion by echoing Canon Collin's jeremiads (a term meant honourably and exactly); others, like the Pope on Eurovision, are reduced to near platitudes on peace-in-our-hearts, or worse still to proffering Nobodaddy religion. "Hold out your hand to Almighty God and you'll be all right, ye sin-bound Jack Sprats" is a tried and popular line for puzzled preachers, yet it strikes me as an insult to any intelligent acceptance of the Christian gospel, which surely Freud laughed out of court long ago.

Religious practices purport to facilitate our quest for God, and that is their only justification, just as political structures and institutions are validated only by their capacity for introducing the just society. By that test, cosseting religion is as damned, as unworthy of maturing men and women, as bread-and-circuses totalitarianism. Or am I being Pelagian, and saying people aren't so bad and all they need from religion is a bit of help to give them additional encouragement? On the contrary, it seems to me that bomb-numbed preachers who in effect say "run to grandad and have a good cry" are much nearer that seductive heresy. If we are to at all succeed in tying up the Christian concepts we have inherited—Sin, Redemption, Grace, Salvation—with our developing knowledge of human nature, we must equate the good news of the Christian gospel with something more than a sedative for nocturnal guilts and fears. When we say (like the Greek tragedians) that pride is the deadliest sin, we are saying that people's highest aspirations, not their residual animal inadequacies, are their own worst enemy, and the escape the Gospel offers is not therefore the escape of boo-hooing our shudders into a sympathetic lap, still less of being induced into an exaggerated horror at our shudders by becassocked priests, but rather an escape from the noose of our own vanity.

That vanity, that stubborn insistence on seeing one's own

show as durable, is what stops us from salvation. It stops individuals who bash on regardless, it stops nations that rely on their own permanency, it stops those manifestations of the Christian Church that are prone to identify ecumenicism with a universal return to their particular fold. Precisely because that vanity is the fatal concomitant of man's evolutionary progress, it is from that that we most need saving.

In this context I want to explore a thought relevant to this "aesthetics" number of PRISM. It concerns creative activity in its widest possible sense. I think I am right in saying that all creative activity is either artistic or persuasive. In other words, in whatever we do beyond the most reflex and routine processes, we are either trying to make something that wasn't there before, because in so doing we are satisfying some urge or impulse that gives us enough incentive to spend time and energy on whatever it is, or else we are trying to get somebody else to do something that they might not otherwise do. Two lists will explain the thought, even if they show it as silly. Under artistic activity I would list not only writing poems, painting pictures and so on—all those well-recognised attempts to shape out into form that is as it happens communicable an instrinsically ineffable experience—but also the pursuit of health, of wisdom, and I suppose too of virtue, as ideals. These are characteristic activities of individuals or close groups. The second list includes, typically, advertisements, and less obviously all public forms of exhortation and command from ringing somebody up to pamphleteering.

Implicit in this analysis is that artistic activity is better than persuasive, if only because its participants are in principle equal, whereas in persuasion it is assumed that you know better (therefore are wiser) than the person you are trying to persuade. The activity of corporate worship is artistic (unless one ignorantly traduces it as an attempt to persuade God). But what is preaching? There have been attempts recently to say that preaching is a dialogue, in which the responding of the audience is as much a component as the speaking of the preacher. The historical reason for this view is no doubt to provide a satisfactorily Protestant-Catholic account of the dual ministry of Word and Sacraments, which the Church of England is particularly anxious to find. Maybe when we have learnt more about extra-sensory perception and all that, we shall be able to explain convincingly just how it is

that the preaching of a sermon to a silent audience is a dialogue. Until we have found out, it seems to me that an undue emphasis on the ministration of the Word and the Sacraments as being the same sorts of activity may be little more than a pious way of saying why people should listen attentively and sympathetically (not critically) to sermons, however bad they are.

What, after all, in 1960, is the point of sermons? The last thing I am saying is let's scrap the ministry of the word. But I simply want to know whether having priests standing up in pulpits talking at people does what it is supposed to do. As instruction it is clearly inefficient, and classes would be better, with all modern aids. But preaching isn't just instructing; *kerygma* isn't *didache*. As proclamation to those ignorant of the gospel (there's your *kerygma*) it needs much care, much prayer, but no justification. But most sermons get preached to the faithful. What are they trying to do? The short answer is exhortation: to exhort the faithful to more devotion, more intelligent understanding of their faith, more concern for its daily application, and so on. For that purpose the traditional adjuncts of sermons (man aloft, lights lowered) clearly help. But in view of all we are beginning to learn about the ways people react against exhortation, it seems to me worth considering whether more prayers (with prayer notes), more congregational Bible-reading, more explanations of lessons (like the Ethiopian eunuch had) do not qualify for an equal place (and time) in the true and effective ministration of the Word.

D.A. writes:

A hill-top village in Burgundy, a sun-drenched Sunday morning, the church so packed with people that many have to stand outside, a community whose leader and founder is still in middle life and most of whose members are under forty: these are just some of the impressions which the name, Taizé, will have for me in future.

For long, I had heard of this new phenomen, a community of a monastic character springing out of the French and Swiss Reformed Churches; I had seen the books and articles of its most distinguished theologian, Max Thurian, I had read the book written by the founder Roger Schutz to expound its ideal. (*This Day Belongs to God*, published in English by the Faith Press and

well worth reading). So I was in some way prepared. And yet, when it came to the point, I was not prepared for this really overwhelming impression of *newness of life,* of something coming straight from the hands of God. I suppose, that we saw the Community at an exceptional, a privileged moment in its history, a moment when it is in full expansion, and has already achieved a dangerous amount of publicity. Such moments do not come often, and perhaps cannot last. But at least while they are with us we must recognise in them a sign from God. And surely in the life of this community, in this element of its withdrawal and in its determination to remain present in the world, in its passion for unity, and the echoes which it has aroused in Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic hearts, we can see a small but authentic sign for the Church and for this age.

It has been fashionable among quite a number of Anglicans to speak scornfully of "Conference-Christians" and "Ecumaniacs". Well, I dare say we do have our weaknesses, but here is someone who remains enthusiastic, and indeed becomes more enthusiastic yearly, about the experience of meeting other Christians in conferences. This summer, it was a three-week conference for theological students at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey which really lifted me off my feet. They were three of the most exhausting, difficult, rewarding, magnificent weeks which I have ever spent.

The Chateau de Bossey is an eighteenth-century house, which stands up above the Lake of Geneva, looking towards Mont Blanc. It is the study centre of the World Council of Churches. There for three weeks, seventy Christians from twenty-eight different nations came together to study and pray, to discuss and question, to eat and sleep, to laugh and dance together. We were attempting to get a view of the present state of the ecumenical movement, and we had among our lecturers many of the leading figures of the World Council, including Dr. Visser t'Hooft himself One of the oustanding personalities of the conference was Frère Jean-Daniel of the Community of Taizé, who conducted the first week's Bible study, and it was perhaps his presence which enabled a predominantly Protestant gathering to be amazingly open and receptive to Catholic ideas.

But one of the best things about such a meeting is the way in which it forces one to re-examine one's conventional patterns

of thought. What do we really mean by "Catholic" and "Protestant"? Are we really so small-minded as to imagine that this is a big thing which Anglicans can work out by themselves? At least for me these questions received a new urgency during these weeks. Above all there is the enrichment of so many new personal contacts, from Iceland to Borneo, which make it certain that one will never again be able to think of separated Christian brethren as *them*, but always and increasingly to think of "us", those who in Christ are being drawn together into one.

The Editor writes:

The English do ritual better than anyone else in the world, whether it be military, ecclesiastical, or any other kind, and Anglican ritual can be the best of any church—indeed in the Cathedral of Exeter it is so. For this latter the Reverend Sir Patrick Ferguson-Davie has been largely responsible and he has now written a book on all ritual involving the bishop, called *The Bishop in Church* (S.P.C.K. 35/-). It may not be perfect but it is a worthwhile attempt to bring back something like order into the diverse muddles that can happen when bishops visit their churches. It has, however, been badly mauled by a reviewer in the *Church Times*. Much of what he says may be true—I am not liturgically competent to comment on this—but he takes particular exception to Sir Patrick's insistence that the pastoral staff should only be used by the diocesan in his diocese. The critic may be right when he says that the crozier is an ensign of office and not one of jurisdiction but he is quite definitely wrong when he says "the logical conclusion of the author's theory is the modern Roman Catholic one, that all bishops, priests and deacons are simply the representatives of the Pope". The bishop without jurisdiction is a contradiction in terms and the present English system of suffragans has nothing to recommend it. How can one be an overseer with nothing to oversee? The logical conclusion of Sir Patrick's theory is merely what he states and that is that the diocesan bishop is the *ordinary* authority of the Church; suffragans (insofar as they have any right to exist), priests and deacons are merely his representatives, but equally he is not the representative of any authority above him, only the representative of the Church itself, the Body of Christ in that diocese.

Letters

CHURCH COURTS

Dear Sir,

The Church Courts are little respected and little used. To make them reputable and useful two principles not generally in evidence in the secular courts will need to be emphasised.

The first is equity, a necessary social principle but not found in law before a high level of functionary such as L.C.J. or beyond law in the Home Office or the Crown.

The second is trial by peers and the introduction of clergymen into Church Courts would assist that. In theory trial by jury expresses this principle, though we speak of a man being up before his betters.

When the judiciary has finished, the administration steps in if it pleases. The Home Office deals with sentences and convictions as it sees fit, subject only to pressure groups or influential persons behind the scenes. The separate functions of legislature judiciary and administration must have proper scope in any reform of Church Courts if it is to win general respect. This is where the bishop comes in, especially if improved methods of selection for diocesan status bring greater respect for new sorts of bishop from laity, clergy and brother bishops.

Law is much too serious a matter to be left to lawyers.

C. K. Hughes.

South Ascot.

ELECTORAL ROLLS

Dear Sir,

Now that the Disestablishment of the Church is being seriously, if not courageously, thought about it is surely time to consider not only the appointment of Bishops but the whole question of the legal rights of parishioners who never darken the doors of the church unless they want something.

At present anybody can fill in an Electoral Roll Form if they profess membership of the Church of England. If they reside in the parish they need never attend the church and their names can never be removed from the Roll. They can of course cause endless trouble at Annual Meetings if they wish and in the future six of them will be able to begin "doctrinal" proceedings against the parish priest. Could any situation be more UNREALISTIC?

Further, Churchwardens can according to the present law be Hindus or Roman Catholics elected by householders and others on an unrealistic Electoral Roll. Only the Church of England could countenance such a farce.

Any historian knows that these and similar rights go back to the time when parishioners were Christians and the Vestry Meeting meant something but the situation today is very different and yet when the question of Revision of qualifications for being on an Electoral Roll was discussed by the Church Assembly the reformers were heavily defeated. Why? Because the Church loves to have it so.

What holds back the witness of the Church today is the curse of Nominalism and outmoded and outdated laws upholding the skeleton of "Christian England". On the one hand we deplore the pagan situation today and on the other "we love to have it so".

If the masses are ever to be converted then it must be shown that membership of the Church is costly. While we "do" babies without question and marry "baptised pagans" with few questions we further a situation which is intolerable.

It is certain that the first step is to put right the method of appointing bishops at whatever the cost but that can only be the beginning of facing with courage and determination the situation as it is today and not as it was a hundred years ago.

Yours sincerely,

Sunderland. PETER F. D. SPARGO

EDUCATION

Dear Sir,

Readers of the July number of PRISM may perhaps be interested to hear that one of the William Temple Association's autumn study groups is to be on the subject of Education Without Religion. Details may be obtained from the Convener of the Group, Liddon House, South Audley Street, W.1.

Yours faithfully,

ANN GOLDEN

Wembley.

BAPTISM

Dear Sir,

Could PRISM give us an article on a pastoral problem which I have nowhere seen discussed but which probably is the point where the Establishment shoe pinches far more feet than the selection

of bishops—the insistence on baptism as a qualification for marriage?

In spite of the rubric urging Communion (which points to confirmation rather than mere baptism), I suspect a law court would insist on the right of any parishioner to be married in his parish church.

However much we deplore "four wheelers", it must seem legalistic to a couple refused marriage when they see another couple, who, though baptised, may have done even less about Church membership, being married without question. To rush someone through preparation and baptism in the limited time usually available is to depreciate baptism as well as marriage.

It would be interesting to know when this insistence began, and whether any who are so particular ask about the baptismal status of those they bury, although the rubric is far more definite there. It seems to me to start us off on the wrong foot in what is usually our first contact with these young people, and to bedevil a real opportunity for evangelism. Yet even Canon Southcott, in spite of careful preparation of the 1,200 he had married at Halton, knew of none becoming regular worshippers, let alone asking for confirmation.

Are we then to wash our hands of these people on or beyond the fringe and cultivate an ingrowing piety of a handful as some urge? If not, how can we win these young people? The Marriage Guidance Council may have pointed the way with their group preparation, if enough Church members are willing to help their clergy in what, in a large parish, is beyond the power of one man.

Yours faithfully,

H. B. Roberts

ORDINATION OF CHILDREN

Dear Sir,

I find very stimulating Mr. Cowan's plea for the ordination of children, and especially his plea that this sort of question should be considered seriously. Much of his evidence is impressive, but I feel that he has missed one very significant point.

It is, I think, obvious that someone who has not been confirmed cannot be ordained. Someone un-confirmed has not *received* the Holy Spirit, as the new proposed baptism rite makes clear; those

who are baptised and no more, have only been given re-birth by the Spirit. Such cannot be ordained; even those who in the old days of the Church were ordained per saltum, had first to receive baptism *and* confirmation.

But the earliest and normative practice of the Church, was *never to confim females*! This seems to have been ignored even by the most ardent defenders of male prerogatives. Take for instance, Lydia, who is baptised at Acts 16 15. She is baptised, but *it does not say* that she received the Spirit. Now this is not coincidence, mere casual omission. When Luke describes the baptism of *men*, he invariably describes the advent of the Spirit. In Acts 2 we have at verse 14, "Ye men (ανδρες) of Judea. . . ." at verse 38, ". . . ." baptised. . . . and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. . . ." and at verse 41, the men are baptised, and presumably, receive the Spirit.

In chapter 8 of Acts, Luke specifically tells us that men *and* women were baptised; but the Spirit *did not come*. When He does come, it is only on the men, and a masculine pronoun is used (αυτους). We cannot be quite sure about the Eunuch in the next story, and I do not wish to argue from silence. But he too, is only baptised, and the Spirit, though mentioned in the story, does not come on him; and I can only guess that this is because he was not, poor thing, a real male. There is of course, a similar ruling for the Old Testament priesthood.

When Cornelius and those with him received the Spirit in chapter 10, there would of course be no women present, where there was a crowd of strangers; note verse 47, "Can any *man* forbid water" (RV). Again the Spirit has come on men only. The same is true at Acts 19 1ff, the last instance to be noted, where the disciples of John who now receive the Spirit at the hands of Paul are said *emphatically* to have been all men (ησαν δε οι παντες ανδρες)
And this I think shows beyond doubt that Lydia did not receive the Spirit, and it is no casual omission that she is not said to have received Him.

Paul himself, as has often been noted, does not mention confirmation and the gift of the Spirit explicitly (though some scholars think they can find such references). But this is only because he had the heretical idea (found in later gnosticism and Montanism) of male and female equality in Christ; and therefore had a dislike for this sacrament which could not be administered to women, and

pointed firmly to their radical inequality. However, at I Cor. 14 34f, he lets the cat right out of the bag. He has been talking about gifts of the Spirit that allow men to prophesy in church, and has been seeking to order this virile activity. But he has to forbid women altogether! Despite his known predilection for the sinful sex! Why should this be? Because even he cannot hide the fact that they have not received the Spirit! If they had, if they could have, not Paul himself could have stood in the Spirit's way, so long as He worked decently and in Order.

This leads to a further theological principle. Women cannot be confirmed, we now agree; but more, they could not even take part in a confirmation service, for they cannot make the vows! Under Anglican ruling, they should not receive communion, being incapable of confimation; and anyway cannot join in what we know is the central act of the Anglican service, the Confession, as they cannot speak in church.

The only area of the Church's life where this old tradition, which recognises that women are not really human, and cannot receive the Spirit, is still preserved, is in the Catholic ordained ministry; but this carefully maintained exclusion, so jealously guarded down the centuries, does surely point to this same conclusion, that women cannot receive the Spirit, cannot be said to be Christian, and are really not human at all.

We must not let the modern version of Paul's heresy sway us, to believe that women are human; Paul even suggested they could pray! (I Cor. 10 1ff). No, the Pastor (or Paul,older and wiser and penitent) has stated the position much more truly, in I Timothy 2: verse 8, "I desire that *men* pray. . . . " (all women are to be concerned with is dressing cheaply). Verse 14, "Adam was not beguiled, but the *woman* being beguiled hath fallen into transgression; but she shall be saved through child-bearing". Paul thought that Man was fallen; but this writer knows that only woman fell. Her salvation is of what sort? Rev. 12 seems to supply the answer. The woman arrayed with the sun gives birth—to a *man-child*—and *he* is caught up to heaven; but she cannot go to heaven, but stays, fed contentedly, in the desert (verses 5-6).

The acknowledgment of this truth of Revelation has important missionary consequences. How can we speak to Islam, if we try to treat women as human beings? How could we talk to a resurgent German National Socialism, with its proper virile contempt

for women, if we continue to confirm *women* in the *Christian* Church? *How could we be united with a new German-Christian Church!*

I regret that Mr. Cowan's enthusiasm ran away with him. The evidence he adduces in fact does support the ordination of *boys* (all his scriptural passages suggest this), and I am sure that this is really his honest opinion, that boys should be ordained *just because they are male,* and for no other reason at all.

And finally, may I add my hope that my letter will help the same discussion of this question as much as Mr. Cowan's charitable article.

Very sincerely,
F. G. DOWNING

Lincoln Theological College.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Cowan's exegesis of scripture in his plea for the ordination of children is, to say the least, questionable, St. Paul uses "child", "children" in the well-known NT spiritual, symbolic sense. Elihu, though younger than Eliphaz, Bildad or Zophar was not necessarily a child. Samuel and Jeremiah were prophets and evidence that prophets as distinct from priests required ordination (or its OT equivalent) is lacking.

What has Mr. Cowan to say, one wonders, about Numbers 8: 24, I Chronicles 23: 24 or II Chronicles 31: 17?

It so happens that at the present I am attempting a special study of those parts of the OT which are never used in the 1955 lectionary. I share and delight in Mr. Cowan's abhorrence of being a Marcionite. But he ought to learn that a healthy refusal to be one also entails certain limitations on "fancy" theological notions.

Yours faithfully,
W. S. BOYCOTT

Cirencester.

POEMS

Dear Sir,

Perhaps, originally, I should have explained myself at greater length; in fact as I have never before written to any correspondence column, I hesitated to do more than query. I should not have gone even so far if I had not felt my confidence shaken.

I had taken PRISM's approach to religion to be an honest attempt to discard cant, habit and sentimentality: but I am no theologian. Then came the verses, which I am in some measure qualified to appraise, and I cannot but wonder whether they are representative of the quality and depth of thought of the whole periodical. When I read that they are included because "some people like them" I feel even more uneasy. Surely many religious people like much that is third-rate? I had hoped that you were urging us to discard this. If poetry is wanted why not draw our attention, for instance, to some of the less well-known Herbert or Vaughan?

Yours faithfully,

ANN E. HINCH

Eastbourne.

PRISM'S *approach to religion is an honest attempt to discard cant habit and sentimentality. If our poems are third-rate, it must be because my poetic taste is third-rate. I am however sure that it is better to try and encourage new poetry from our readers than to reprint "less well-known Herbert or Vaughan" which is almost always less well-known precisely because it does not speak in our language to our condition—another interest of* PRISM.—*Ed.*

BISHOPS

Dear Sir,

The extracts from the introduction to "Bishops" published last month interested me greatly. But I believe that Anglican episcopacy tends to be irrelevant for a much more fundamental reason which obscures the nature of episcopacy to ourselves and makes it unsaleable to Nonconformists.

I would agree that our bishops are good men, humble, keen, industrious, not infrequently inspired, indeed at times prophetic, but they are forced to become prelates.

Though we tinker with the situation by having assistant bishops and suffragans, the fact remains that the average parish is lucky if it sees a Bishop once a year and the average Bishop is lucky if he ought not to perform 100 confirmations a year. So the inevitable happens—"The bishop is coming next Sunday" is an event, a draw, a catch. With the best will in the world he is bound to become a V.I.P. lion and one is tempted to agree with the Nonconformist who says "If this is episcope we are well out of it."

We do not understand and show forth that episcope is the over-

sight of a shepherd over his flock, feeding it (by word and sacrament), building it up, defending it, keeping it healthy and "salty". And this involves knowing the individual sheep.

How are we to arrange for it to be a frequent and normal event for the overseer to be seen shepherding—by presiding at the Eucharist, by rounding up his people and clergy, by being a real Father in God to them, on their own level?

The only answer I can see is "to kick the clergy upstairs". archbishops to be metropolitans (cardinals if you wish), diocesans (with a few amalgamations) to be provincials, all rural deans to be bishops (elected by the Ruridecanal Conference which would at last have something worth doing). Then the episcope would again be recognisable to the observers from the early Church, meaningful to Nonconformists, even relevant to the average Englishman and, I venture to suggest, soundly scriptural and an improved vehicle for Our Lord, the Holy Ghost.

I hope I shall read this in the new book.

Yours faithfully,

UVEDALE LAMBERT

SOCIOLOGY

Dear Sir,

The mystery of what your illegible correspondent from Ladbroke Grove is driving at in his letter on page 39 of your September issue is almost as impenetrable as that of his identity. This being so, it is likely to be as difficult for your readers to guess what are the "real issues" to which Philip Mairet and I failed to "get down" as it is for us. But as his thought seems to be revolving round some matters upon which I at any rate have more sympathy with him that he might suspect, I should like to make a few comments on his letter.

I do not believe that we are "faced with the total lack of constructive Christian thought" though I would admit that a good deal of honest Christian thinking, in attempting to grapple realistically with existing situations has, however subconsciously, accepted too many sub-Christian assumptions about these situations. Still less would I agree that ours is a "totally amoral society"; part of our troubles is due to the fact that the English have a passion for attempting to ameliorate by moralistic effort situations

which have escaped an adequate diagnosis in the light of a Christian doctrine of man and society. In this error churchmen have been deeply involved.

But such a diagnosis was what F. D. Maurice was always so conspicuously trying to elucidate and bring to bear, and why your correspondent should demand that "Christian Socialists" should have renounced—or should now renounce—"Maurice and all his works" as if he were some sort of devil, I am at a loss to understand. The complaint commonly made by secular socialist critics of the first Christian Socialists is that they were too much content with small experiments; too much occupied (J. M. Ludlow especially) with workers' control; and in general too "revolutionary" at a time when it was necessary for "the workers" to organise centrally to emancipate themselves from "capitalism".

This is not the place, nor would it be proper for me, to attempt an apologia for the (doubtless unimportant) roles which Philip Mairet and I have played in the field of Christian social criticism for a good many years—in my case for half a century. Mr. Mairet was himself a craftsman and the friend and spokesman of leading workers in this milieu. I was a humble colleague of G. K. Chesterton on his paper for a dozen years. All my writing has been, in intention at any rate, congruous with a socialism that fulfils man's individuality and holiness, and does not turn him into part of a machine.

It is time that men like Mr. Ignotus of Ladbroke Grove tried to do better, in the context of their day, than we were able to do in our own. But if they are to do so they must engage themselves with situations as they now are and not with imaginary ones as they would prefer them to be. This, after all, is what Maurice, Kingsley and Ludlow did, and if your correspondent thinks they made mistakes, let him remember that the man who will never risk making a mistake will never make anything.

I will add in conclusion that with what Mr. Christopher Martin says at the end of his letter (a, b and c) I most warmly agree.

Yours sincerely,

MAURICE B. RECKITT

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Reviews

TIMOTHY BEAUMONT

THE ADVOCACY OF THE GOSPEL, by *Donald Soper*, Hodder & Stoughton. 4s. 6d.

PUTTING IT OVER, by *George Reindorp*, Hodder & Stoughton. 3s. 6d.

Dr. Soper has produced in this volume of lectures given at the Yale Divinity School last year a fascinating study of methods of presenting the Gospel today. He discusses the different stages of "preaching to the pagan, preaching to the porch, preaching to the pew and preaching to the penitent-form" and has most interesting matter when talking about the first and the open air preaching which he has done for so long on Tower Hill. This is a book which will probably not give much explicit help to preachers and speakers immediately, but because of its wisdom and charity will sow seeds in their minds to bear fruit in the future.

Dr. Reindorp's book on the other hand, as its sub-title "Ten Points for Preachers" shows, is more of a handbook. Ably done, it should form the basis of a pastoralia lecture in every theological college. But for those who are already engaged in preaching it will probably not be of much help since it has little new, and those who are likely to read it will know it (even if they do not always practise it) while those who do not know it will not read it.

JOB, by *John Ferguson*, Epworth Press. 4s. 6d.

This play, which runs for an hour and twenty minutes, for seven men, three women and a small chorus, is a very good play for small semi-sophisticated amateur production. It has a splendid caricature of an Anglican parson in it and a Christian twist at the end which solves the problem which confronts all adaptors of the Book of Job and which baffled Mr. Macleish in his recent "J.B.", that of trying to make a pre-Christian book of the Bible produce a Christian answer.

PERSONAL CHRISTIANITY, by *E. H. Robertson.* National Book League, 3s. 6d.

This is one of the series of the Readers Guides published by the National Book League. It is "designed to help someone in this country who wishes to know about Christianity and has the intention of trying to live it". It is quite superb and every parish priest should use it as the foundation of the modern section of his parish life.

It is easy in any book list to single out omissions and it is one of the virtues of this list that the present reviewer can only find one serious one, that is, Austin Farrer's *The Shorter Bible.*

AFRICAN PULSE, *Martin Jarrett-Kerr, C.R.,* Hodder & Stoughton. 4s. 6d.

A new edition of this intensely readable book on life in an African hospital, first published in 1960.

> ". . . St. Paul out of his experience of grace, knew himself to be called by God, 'separated for his work from his mother's womb'; election and predestination were for him not philosophical concepts, but realities of his personal relation with God. He is not careful of consistency as a philosopher or a lawgiver would be. But that is just what the Articles take him to have been. They deal with his inspired religious utterances as if they were legal pronouncements, and draw conclusions from them as a lawyer might do from the words of an Act of Parliament. They obscure the teaching of the New Testament by getting it out of proportion. To many of us it will seem that the fundamental affirmation of the Christian revelation is that God is love and that all other theological statements must be shown to be in harmony with that basic truth."
>
> ". . . After all, it would have been a miracle if a summary of Christian doctrine drawn up in the sixteenth century had proved to be adequate in the twentieth, after the transformation of our civilisation and our culture by the rise and progress of natural science and historical criticism. That miracle has not happened. My plea is that the time is long overdue to admit that fact and to take the appropriate action."
>
> From *The Thirty-nine Articles* by Dr. W. R. Matthews. Hodder and Stoughton. 3s. 6d.

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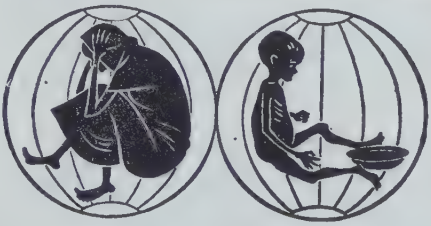

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SIXTEEN YEARS AGO, on August 6, 1945, a blinding white light appeared over the city of Hiroshima. Soon the city was overshadowed by a dreadful cloud which began to glow blood-red as it reflected the most terrible fire that had ever burned on the surface of the earth. In that moment a hell was created more ghastly than the most tortured imagination had ever been able to conceive.

. . . It so happens, by an amazing coincidence, that August 6 is celebrated by the Church as the commemoration of another occasion when an unearthly light of blinding whiteness was seen on this earth. On a hill in Palestine, some 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ was seen by a chosen few of his followers to shine with a brilliant whiteness. On this occasion, too, a cloud overshadowed the witnesses, and out of the cloud came the voice of God . . .

This is an extract from "Disfiguration or Transfiguration" by the Rev. C. G. Wilson, one of the regular "Epistles" published in the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship's Monthly Letters. If you would like to read more, write to: **The Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, 29 Great James Street, London, W.C.1.**

GOSPEL NOSTALGIA

As if the world should somehow trace
Steps back to the once womb perfection
Of its Galilee-Judaea Jesus lore.
But let hydrogen, oxygen confection

Of the ever present Spirit be lively
To scatter the nostalgia of this earth
Girt idyll, recover its once death
Pregnancy in the watery birth

Of our street lives; be topical
Truth leader in our roundabout
Mammon performances; pour on us
Rich creamy lotions, ruffling gusts

Of epiphany for us to look, and be
Our best in dance halls, love feasts,
Family gatherings: all such epitomes
Of the pivoting peak-pointing yeasts

In our whirligig mechanical lives;
And find in them relativities of breed
For what is worth living and dying for:
Find them incomparable seed.

FRANK BUCHANAN

FROM EVERLASTING

He was set up from everlasting; the
Projection of the Father's self, to stand
As his delight throughout eternity,
Expression and expressor of his love.
"And I was daily His delight" said He,
"When He marked out the bounds of earth;"
So love's expression caused all things to be
Eternally, transcending time and death.

And His delight was with the sons of men
For all mankind are members of the Son,
Summed up in Him to die and rise again
In re-creation, of the stuff of God.
He is the Father's purpose and He came
Into mortality to light the way,
The golden way of suffering and of pain,
Through death into the Godhead's endless day.

The eternal generation of the Son
Reflects itself in us, as time's expression
Who, groaning now our travail has begun
Await the immortal stamp on our mortality.
Christ is mankind and all mankind is Him,
We died with Him, and with Him, rose again
And will rise clear in Him, who see but dim
Analogies of Love's eternal reign.
We, in our travail, long to be complete;
Made fit, O Lord, to kneel before Thy feet.

A. D. DUNCAN

Church Architecture and Christian Unity

RALPH ACKROYD

Our church architect, Mr. Norman Haines of *Gordon Jackson and Partners, Grays Inn, London,* sent me a copy of the February 1959 issue of PRISM, which I read with interest. Lawrence Dale's article 'The Church Plan' prompts me to send you the plan of the new Pilgrim Congregational Church, Plymouth (*see outside back cover*), now being erected, so that your readers may compare it with the plan of St. Swithun's, Oxford. If we are still tragically divided in ecclesiastical policy there is some indication that the Holy Spirit may be leading us towards unity through worship.

Lawrence Dale speaks of our Lord—that surely is what he means by the centrality of the altar—'in the midst of them.' He says that 'fundamentally the Church is a body of faithful people.' 'The Church', that is the building (we call it the Chapel to distinguish the building from the community that meets in it), 'is all the better for being homely.' He speaks of 'two or three' and of being 'gathered together.' This is familiar language in Congregationalism. Unfortunately much of our Church architecture in the last hundred years has obscured our vision of the Church. We have built auditoria for oratorical preaching to great congregations. We have elevated the organ and the choir. Of recent years we have often reacted from this only to copy the old traditional Anglican plan which, as Mr. Dale indicates, is now being increasingly rejected by Anglicans themselves. Alternatively, where money has been short or imagination lacking, we have erected oblong buildings with little meaning and less beauty. There is now a movement among us to combine the simplicity, strength, and meaning of the old Meeting Houses of the 17th and 18th centuries, with much, we are glad to admit, we have learned through encounter with other Communions in the Ecumenical Movement.

At Pilgrim Church, as at St Swithun's, financial resources have been limited. The site is restricted and is not in a prominent position. A really lovely dual purpose Hall in faced brick already existed, with cloakrooms and kitchen attached. The architect has

used the available space imaginatively. There has been no stunt planning; for example the fan shape of the Church proper simply evolved from the conditions imposed by the site and the needs of the Church.

I would draw attention to certain features which may profitably be compared with those mentioned by Mr. Dale. We have placed a Quiet Room in close proximity to the main Chapel, the glass screens emphasising the intimate association of the two buildings. This Quiet Room has its own entrance so that it may be kept open every day, a reminder that Christianity is not a one day in the week religion. This is a facility increasingly demanded by Free Church folk. The Minister's Vestry is so placed as to give access to the main Chapel and the Quiet Room, besides having its own private entrance. The Minister is thereby easily accessible for interview at any time. The vestibule is in the centre of the whole block of buildings, giving access not only to the Chapel and Quiet Room but to the main hall and smaller rooms. Whatever is happening in the building, those participating must pass through the Vestibule, which commands an uninterrupted view of the Chapel, the great central Cross at the far end being illuminated at night by a small floodlight from one side of the building. The whole life of the Church is kept therefore in the presence of Christ.

The Chapel itself seats about two hundred but as its length and breadth (at the widest point) are the same no one is far from the centre and even a small congregation is not lost in the building. The pews are angled so that the congregation will feel they are sitting round the Lord's Table. The Table is central, the Minister and Deacons sitting behind it and completing the circle. A large Bible will lie open on the Table when the sacrament is not being celebrated. The pulpit, although set to one side, is also virtually central to the congregation as it was in the old Meeting Houses. We believe that the Word is elevated equally in the sermon and the sacrament. The choir is so placed that they are visible but are not the focus of attention. They also complete the circle of the gathered Church, and being together can sing better. (Here I cannot resist expressing my amusement at Mr. Gower-Jones' dictum in his article on the Folk Mass that 'the true Puritan would have no music at all.' Some Anglicans have a curious ignorance of history. The Roundheads gloried in the Psalms and Isaac Watts was the father of English Hymnody).

The plan of St. Swithun's does not indicate the nature of the organ. Pilgrim has a pipe organ and we have put it in the proper place acoustically. It will be heard, but not seen. We hope one day to be able to afford a detached console and have kept a place for this behind the Ministers' stalls. In front of the organ and above the Communion Table rises a plain white Cross. It is mounted on a hardwood screen, darker at its base to symbolise Christ's conquest over fear and sin and death, and at the crossing rays of light in grey and gold symbolise the dawning of the Resurrection morning.

There remains to mention the large glass screens flanking the entrance to the Chapel. Two on each side incorporate the ancient symbols of the anchor and the fish—the Church is Catholic; the other two incorporate the ecumenical symbol of the World Council of Churches, the ship of the Church carrying the Gospel to the whole man throughout the whole world—the Church is apostolic. The centre screens which include the doors into the Chapel feature the same symbols—one in each door—but also include the Star of Bethlehem in the side panels, and in the centre, flanking the clear glass which affords an unbroken view over the Font to the Table and the Cross, the waves of the Red Sea (or of the Jordan) are parted to link the first Passover and Covenant with the second.

I would not suggest that Pilgrim Church represents a general movement in Congregational Church architecture, though there have been similar buildings erected in recent years. Nor do I imagine that St. Swithun's would be acceptable to all Anglicans. But perhaps we can hope that, under God, they may be pointers to our eventual unity.

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HODDER AND STOUGHTON

New Churches

J. T. A. Gunstone

A maze of new churches has grown in Britain in the last ten years or so. In a building drive unequalled since the early nineteenth century, the Church of England alone has constructed nearly three hundred.

Of criticism of these buildings there is plenty. Some say the Church has wasted an opportunity that will not return for another century. Instead of trying to create a modern style of architecture, expressing present-day ideas of Christian worship, the ecclesiastical authorities have allowed (or compelled) architects to haunt the styles of past ages with leaping arches and skeleton bell-towers.

Perhaps the Church gets the kind of buildings she deserves. Archdeacons and diocesan boards, aching with the demands from a spreading population, say there is neither the time nor the money for experiments. Congregations need roofs over their heads—quickly. Also, they point out, the English churchman is rigidly conservative in these matters. He will indulge in all sorts of ideal homes, but not in new styles of churches. He likes his place of worship to look like the one he went to Sunday School in—down to the brass eagle lectern.

Robert Maguire and Keith Murray are among those architects who are trying to build in spite of these difficulties. They can see no point in designing a church on the assumption that it must look something like a space-age Gothic creation. Its foundations are not in what people think a church should look like, but in what the Christian community in a parish believes *the Church* to be. The preliminaries are theological and speculative, rather than fashionable and prejudiced.

So they begin with the local congregation's understanding of itself. What is a church for? What is the Church's activity inside it? What part do the clergy and laity take in those activities? What impressions should the building give to those inside and out? Only when questions like these have been asked and discussed do they try and translate the answers into the language of architecture, into the delicate union of the functional and the symbolical.

It is, they admit ruefully, a lengthy business. It involves many meetings with church committees before pencil can be put to paper.

Obviously this method would be very trying to an archdeacon in a hurry. But the results are remarkable. Few new churches have raised such interest as Maguire and Murray's design for St. Paul's, Bow Common. (*See plan on inside back cover*). Significantly, it is the first new church in this country to be featured in the *Architectural Review* since the war.

You approach it from Stepney through dingy prefabs on Burdett Road. In a sense it is incomplete in that it was designed to be set in the midst of the eleven-storey blocks of flats that are scheduled to be built round it shortly. But the effect is unforgettable. The first sight of St. Paul's chunky, humped silhouette is like a physical shock. Impressions crowd the mind. It symbolises strength, permanence—the rock on which Christ built his Church. Its bare, brick walls, as purple-grey as an industrial haze, speak of a fortress, a Kingdom. Above them shines the glazed, angular lantern, framed in blue-painted steel and roofed in aluminium. By night the church changes. Now it is a ship, the ark of God riding through the shadows; or, with the lights on, a holy mountain, burning inwardly.

Through the porch are more shocks. Gone are the familiar aisles with a sanctuary at the east end. The church is square and there is a lot of space—the architects call it "organised space", for space is the backcloth against which the furnishings tell their purpose.

The altar is in the centre of the church in the lightest part of the floor under the lantern. Slightly raised and bare of ornaments, it is majestic in its isolation. One visitor said it reminded her of the altar on which Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac. A black steel corona bearing candles encircles the open space above it. The congregation sit in movable benches on three sides: in the Eucharist they are participators, not spectators, the Christian family grouped round the Lord's table. The priest faces them from behind the altar. As yet there is no lectern and pulpit: these will be added later.

An octagonal font stands near the door. The porch through which you enter is also eight-sided. There was not enough money for a separate baptistry, so the shape of the font and of the porch link in their own symbolic way the sacrament of Baptist with admission to the Church.

The stress on functionalism is carried down to small details. The foundation stone, for example, is no mere commemorative tablet stuck halfway up a wall. Square and inscribed with the words

"Christ conquers" and the date, it really is a cornerstone on one of the angles of the building.

"I suppose churches have fashions like everything else", remarked an elderly parishioner, who was married in the old church over sixty years ago. But she was wrong. St. Paul's isn't "in the fashion". It isn't even "modern" in the way we understand it. Its affinities are primitive rather than modern. It takes us as far back as Israel's first tent of meeting. Its inspiration springs from the whole history of the People of God, from the Old Testament as well as from the New, and still it tells of the meaning, life and purpose of the Christian Church in industrial dockland today. It speaks the Gospel to those who worship and to those who pass it by—a proclamation in bricks and concrete, in steel, glass and wood.

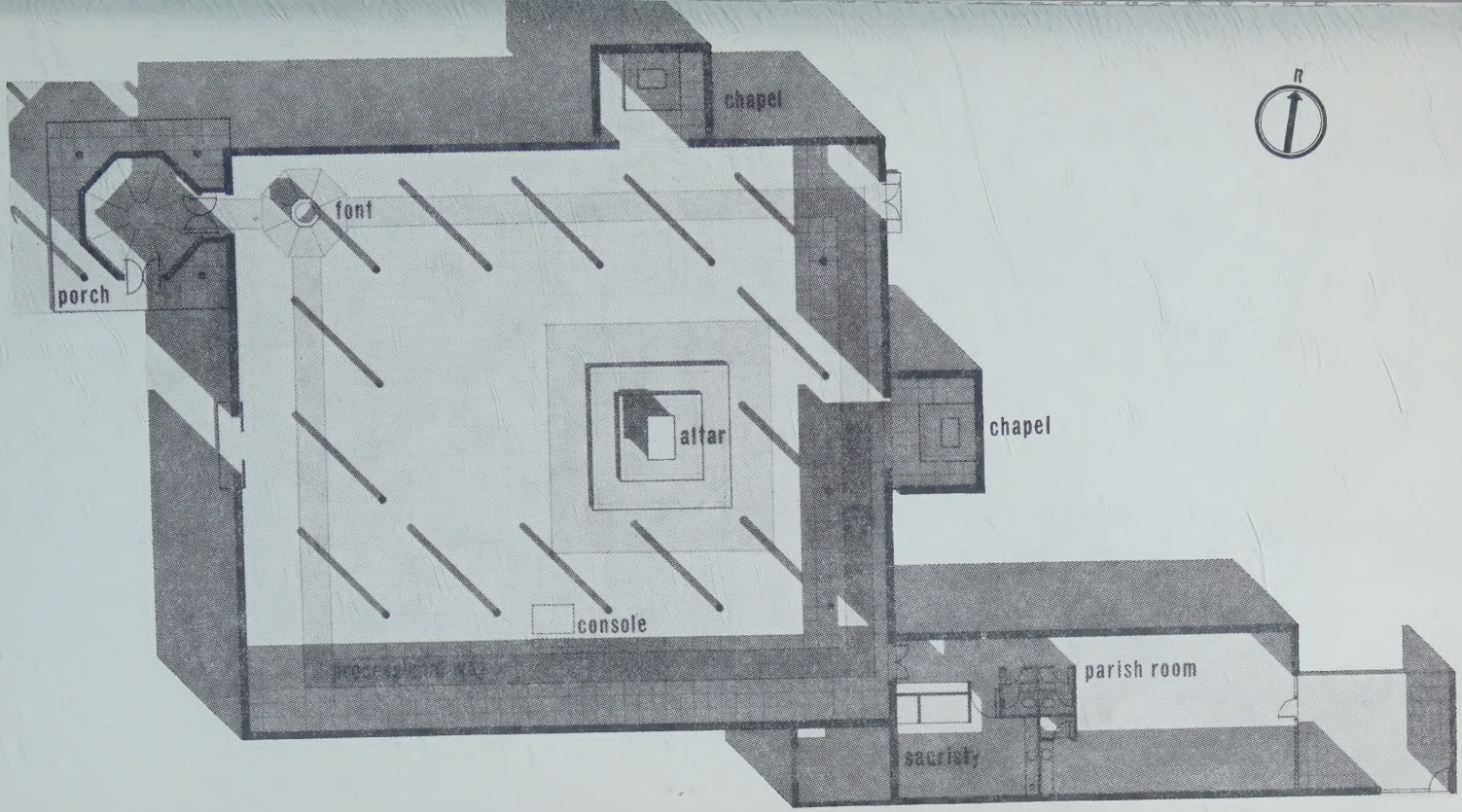
Robert Maguire and Keith Murray have worked together for nearly ten years. They are young men, the former a Roman Catholic, the latter an Anglican. With two feet, as it were, in both camps, it is perhaps to the credit of some authorities in the established Church that their first two churches are Anglican (the second is now being built at Perry Beeches, Birmingham).

But will the Church as a whole be bold enough to commission more buildings from architects like these? Only the future will know—and judge.

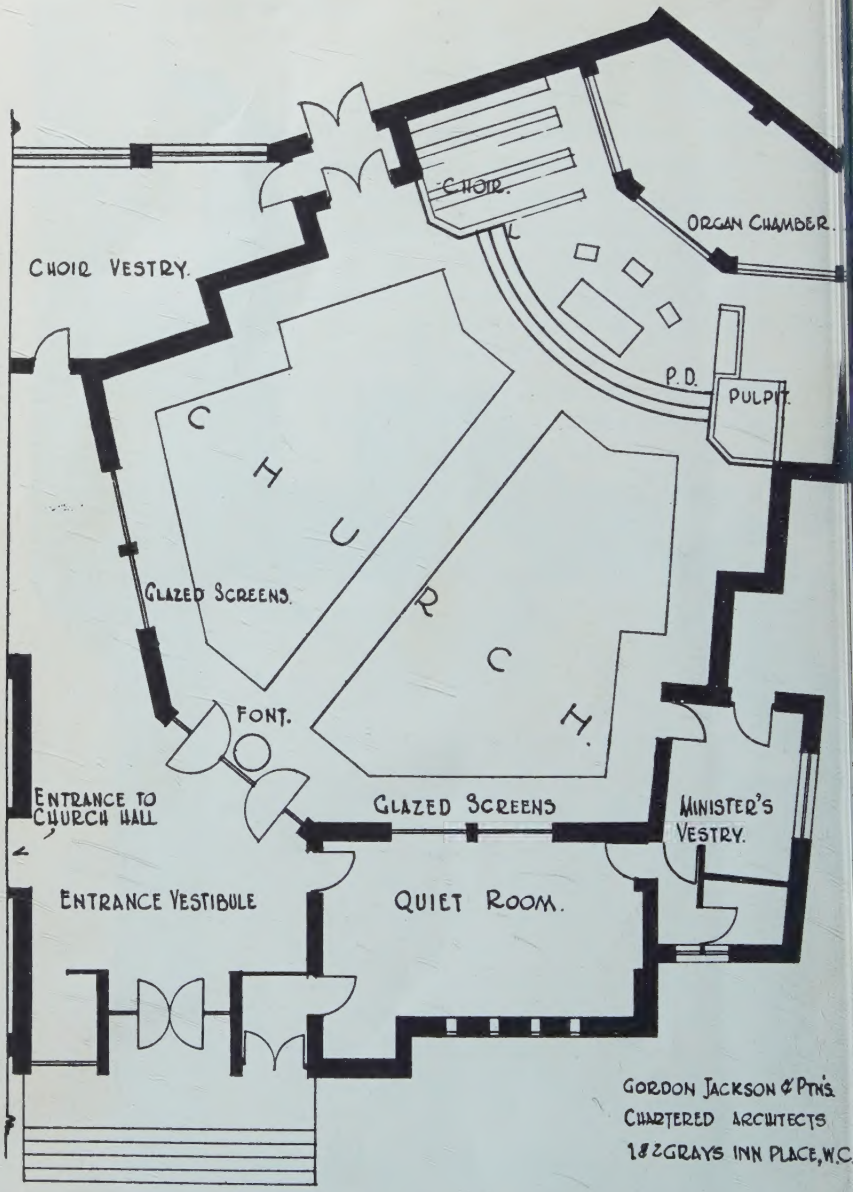
THE FINEST FILES

"I think the system works remarkably well. It is, in fact, conducted by consultation between the office of the Archbishop of Canterbury and a special secretary of the Prime Minister's office who, I am told, has the finest files on the background and lives of the clergy in the country. After they have taken all the soundings and consultations that are necessary, it is only then that a name is submitted to the Sovereign. So far from the Sovereign taking no interest in the matter, I have heard that Queen Victoria is known to have turned down a name at least once on the grounds that the man preached her a very long dull sermon at some former time."

Lord Hawke on ATV's "About Religion".



St. Paul's, Bow Common. Maguire and Murray. (*See page* 66.)



Pilgrim Congregational Church, Plymouth (*see page* 62).

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